

AUGUST 1947

THE

Atlantic



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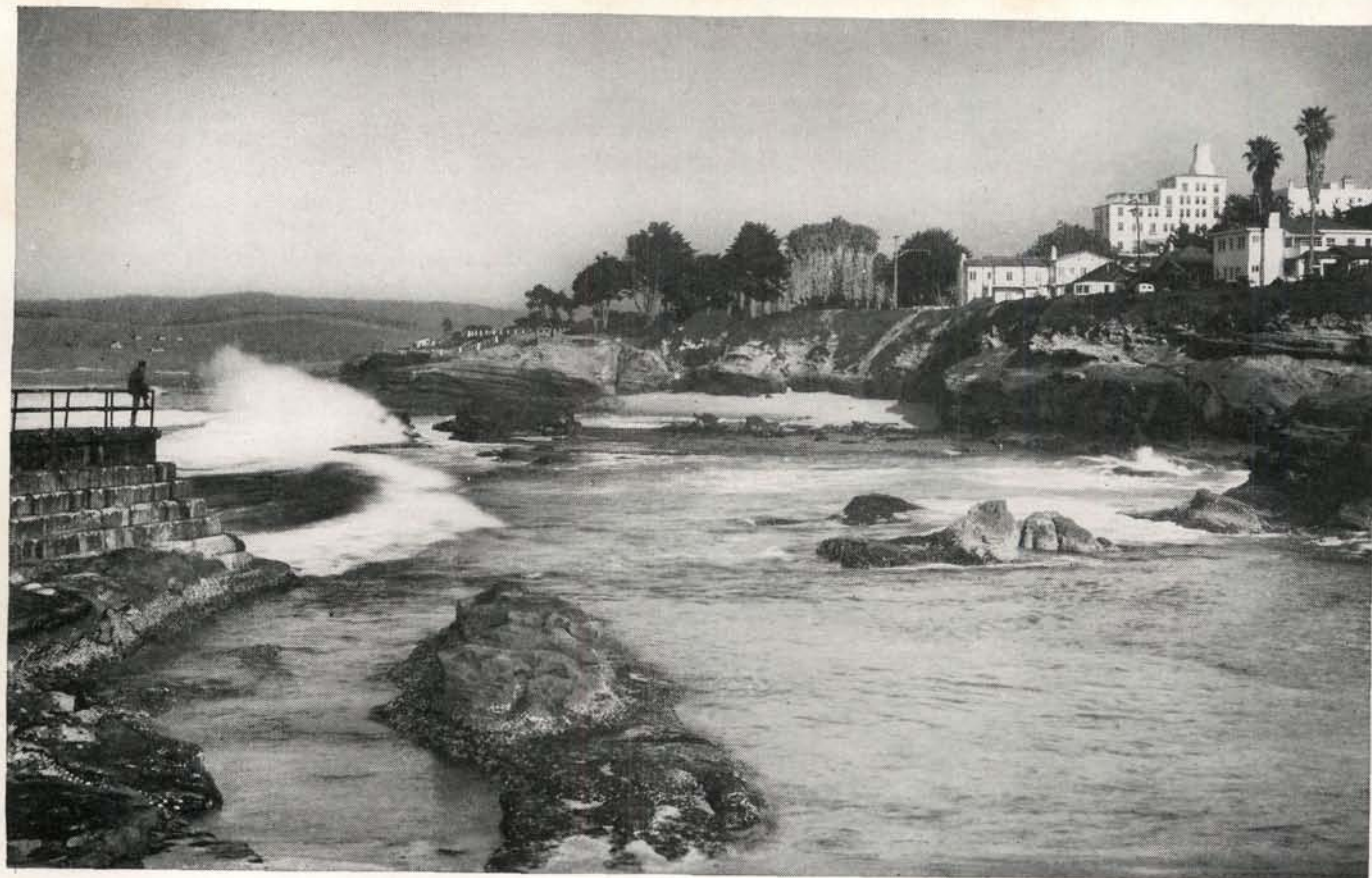
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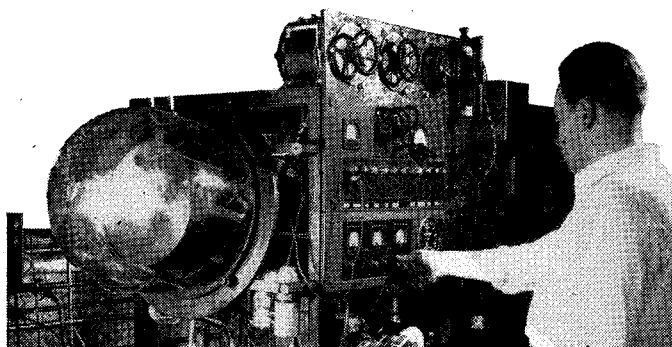
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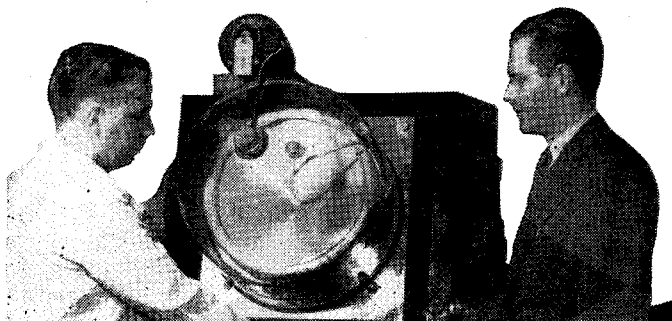
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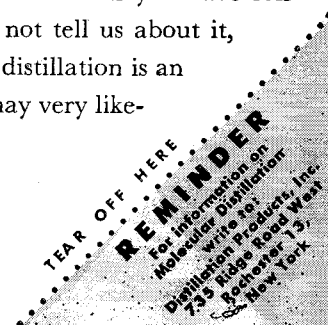
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THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



Atomic Energy

THE day of the Hiroshima bomb, August 6, 1945, was staggering both as revelation and as warning. It made known the results of a success achieved on December 2, 1942. That was the day when Enrico Fermi, Arthur Compton, and their associates in the Metallurgical Laboratory at the University of Chicago accomplished the first self-sustaining, or chain, reaction in uranium.

The crux of the achievement is the fact that the uranium atom, when its nucleus is struck by an electrically neutral particle — a neutron — traveling at the right speed and under the right conditions, splits into two atoms, one of barium and one of krypton, releasing some two hundred million electron volts of energy and liberating several more free neutrons to produce the subsequent fission of more uranium atoms, the release of further energy, the liberation of more free neutrons, and so on and on.

It sounds simple, but from the scientific point of view it was the most exacting problem to which men's minds had ever been set. Professor Niels Bohr reported to physicists at Washington in January, 1939, the theory of Meitner and Frisch, interpreting experimental results of Hahn and Strassmann, that fission of the uranium atom to give barium and krypton is accompanied by the release of tremendous energy.

From a string of equations on paper to actual controlled release of energy took nearly four years. From the Stagg Field demonstration of December 2, 1942, to completion and use of the Alamogordo test bomb in New Mexico, July 16, 1945 — about two years and a half. From the Alamogordo test to Hiroshima — three weeks; Hiroshima to Nagasaki — three days; Nagasaki to the surrender of Japan and the end of the world's worst war, August 14, 1945 — five days.

But such a pace must be appraised against two facts. First, it was the pace of emergency effort directed at a single specific goal — the atomic weapon. And it took the combined leadership and guidance of Roosevelt, Churchill, King, Stimson, Marshall, Bush, Conant, Oppenheimer — that is to say, the chiefs of state of mighty nations, military acumen of the highest order, and surpassing skill in the intricate business of focusing and coordinating scientific activity.

Second, in terms of the evolution of science itself, this pace was the spurt in the final stretch of a long race: Klaproth had isolated a "half-metallic" substance from pitchblende and named it uranium in 1789. For a hundred and fifty years thereafter, bits of knowledge were accumulated in widely scattered areas and at irregular intervals — a theory here, a device there — until in 1939 the whole mosaic could be set and fixed in the Meitner-Frisch calculations. The six years and a half from these to the shattering blasts of two years ago this August are clearly the mere visible peak of an iceberg in the ocean of time.

Controlling the genie

Even more clearly, what has happened and what has not happened in regard to atomic energy in the two years since August, 1945, must be reckoned against the longer time-scale. In the United Nations, in the United States, and in other nations, substantial effort has been made toward thoroughgoing attack on the related problems of controlling atomic weapons and realizing atomic utilities. But no large-scale benefits in industrial power have been achieved. In unhappy degree, progress toward these objectives has been held up by debate, often at cross-purposes, over world control of atomic weapons.

Bills for the establishment of domestic control of atomic energy began to pour into the hoppers of

Why the Railroads Can't Afford NOT to Modernize!

A Dollars-and-cents Example That Will Interest Travelers, Labor and Investors

For a long time the C&O has said that America's railroads must modernize their passenger equipment—or forfeit a great opportunity.

In print and in private we have lampooned the “rolling tenements” that still pass for sleeping cars. We have stumped for modern streamlined trains to replace tired, creaking old day coaches. And over and over we have stated that, given attractive equipment, and new comforts and services, railroads could open the door on a new era of travel . . . *The C&O is replacing every old sleeping car, day coach and diner on its main lines, with streamlined cars.*

But Is It Practical?

Standpatters in the industry are still shaking their heads. But lately more reasonable people have been asking, “How can the large-scale replacement of old trains be practical?”

They point out that several of our largest systems had serious deficits in 1946. And everyone knows that the railroads are caught between rocketing costs and lagging rates. “How,” they ask, “can such an industry afford large outlays for new equipment?”

The answer is that the railroads can't afford *not* to make these outlays. And here is a dollars-and-cents example:

The Investment That Is Fast Returning Its Cost

Last August one of the C&O Lines, the Pere Marquette, installed two new daytime streamliners—the last word in passenger attractiveness.

The new trains have carried 86% more passengers than old trains carried over the same route during the same period of the previous year—when traffic was still swollen by war emergencies.



Which will it be—modernization or continued deficits?

Here is the proof of the pudding: In less than 4 years, at the present rate, the increase in passenger receipts will equal the total cost of the trains!

Modern equipment is not a luxury that only a few fortunate systems, like the C&O, can afford. Even a bankrupt railroad can borrow money today to buy such equipment at 2% interest.

Which Way Do We Go?

Railroads now face a critical choice:

If pessimist thinking, old-line practices and Toonerville equipment continue to be tolerated, then regardless of rate relief, further deficits and bankruptcies are certain.

But, if, on the other hand, these liabilities are replaced by modern ideas and modern trains, our railroads can again be a credit to our country. They can also be a bulwark of our national defense, which, as every citizen knows, depends on a flourishing transportation system.

The Chesapeake and Ohio Lines

Terminal Tower, Cleveland 1, Ohio

the United States Congress a month after the Hiroshima explosion. Yet it is significant that the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission was established in January, 1946, some eight months before President Truman could sign the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 calling for the creation of the United States Atomic Energy Commission.

The Atomic Energy Act

Equally significant, probably, is the fact that the United States Atomic Energy Commission is today a going concern. It is operating under a clear directive, while a comparably clear directive on the international scale is yet to be framed.

It was evident from the introduction of the May-Johnson bill and other bills in the fall of 1945 that domestic responsibility for and authority over atomic energy would move from the War Department to a new entity. What that entity was to be, required a year to decide, the interval being some measure of the scope of the responsibility, its vital importance to the security of the nation, its appalling newness.

The Commission took over the Manhattan District formally on January 1, 1947, and received Senate confirmation on April 9. Thus, though it took the United States but three months to assemble a suitable Commission, four and a half months had to pass before the Commission was confirmed and could go ahead with the tremendous tasks involved. The record since April 9 is clear indication that it was worth while waiting. The present Commissioners have another year to serve, for the Atomic Energy Act provides that complete reappointment take place after it has been in force for two years, with staggered reappointments thereafter.

The Commission's big job

The Commission must handle a process and a material that are at once the most lethal weapon man knows and potentially an economic and industrial force of the first magnitude. Moreover, they must control a governmental monopoly of sweeping extent. This monopoly is occasioned by the fact that over two billion dollars of the people's money is invested in it, and by the fact that, whether as weapon or as power plant, the fissioning atom is a deadly thing demanding, for the common safety, a system of controls and precautions to be invoked on a national scale by no agency less than government itself.

To the Congress and to others responsible governmentally for setting up mechanisms for peacetime control and development, the task came full-fledged and with no warning, and there was a complicated mass of complex information to be mastered even before intelligent questions could be put to a witness. Senators had to go to school, and went with a will. Meanwhile time passed. The atmosphere of secrecy

unquestionably had tricky psychological effects, for secrecy and the governmental tradition of our nation have not had much in common.

As the war ended and it became plain that the Manhattan District would be going out of business, there was an exodus of workers, professional and otherwise, from the District's operating centers at Oak Ridge, Hanford, and Los Alamos. In part, this was the natural rebound of scientists and others who had been working at a high pace and in unusual circumstances for long periods. In part, it resulted from the desire of people to return to earlier and familiar occupations — the physics professor to get back to his laboratory and classroom, the mechanic to work again in his accustomed machine shop.

Yet the District, to protect the national investment of which it was trustee and to continue progress in an unstable world, had to do its best to hold the frame together, to hold people, to adapt conditions to meet their desires. The establishment of regional laboratories to enable major contractors to continue their work for the District, but nearer to their own plants, was part of the answer. The hazards of uncertainty were, of course, renewed at first when the Commission took over the undertaking.

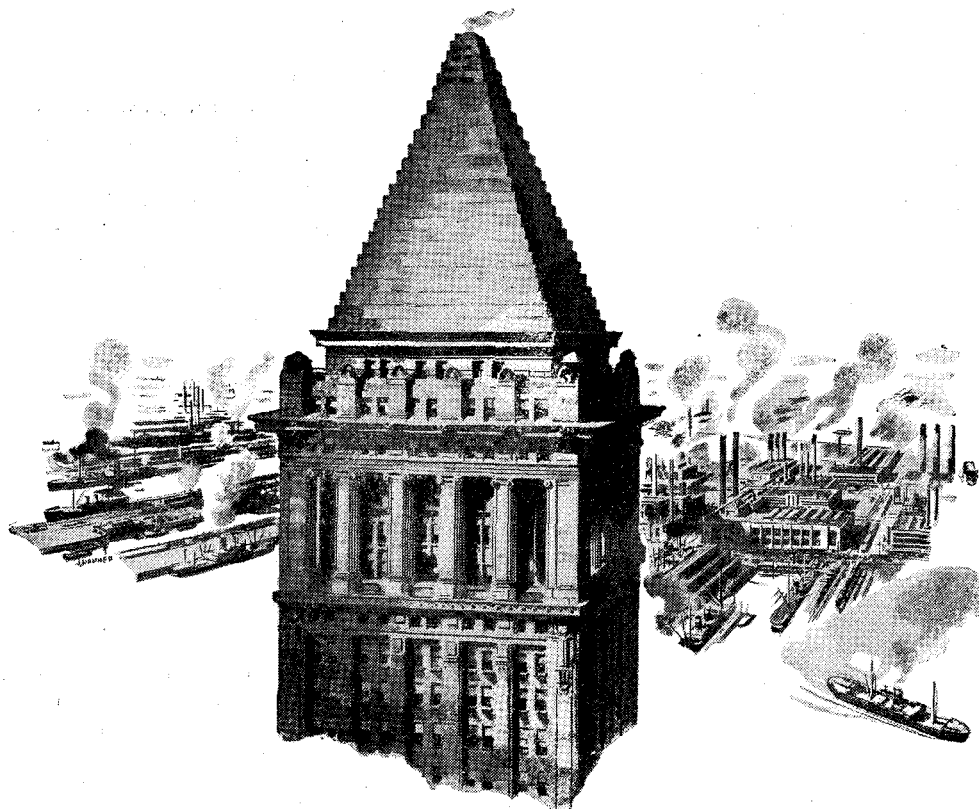
The prospect for atomic machines

What is the working situation today? The first answer to this question is that there will not be any atomic-powered automobiles for a long time. Nor will there soon be atomic-powered aircraft, though the Army Air Forces are at work on the possibility.

Atomic energy for industrial uses — to drive generators for the manufacture of readily transmissible electric power — is a matter of the future, and will remain so for some years. If an all-out effort were to be made in this direction, disregarding economic considerations as they could be disregarded in the Manhattan District's bomb-building days and cannot be disregarded in a peacetime economy, the generation of electricity by means of atomic energy significant in amount, in cost, and in reliability might be achieved in as little as two or three years.

With ordinary economic controls operating, such a demonstration will at best be a matter of five to ten years. In ten to twenty years, one may expect further specific advance, but what form it will take is a matter beyond any confident prediction. Not only the technical problems involved, but far-reaching questions of social needs, perplex even the most fully informed, with the result that views vary widely.

Specialized applications of atomic energy where cost considerations are secondary or where natural conditions are extraordinary, as in the Sahara, are regarded by some competent judges as a logical next



DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS one million more industrial workers have been covered by retirement plans. A substantial number of these plans are financed through pension trusts administered by banks . . . Since 1913, Bankers Trust Company has had its own self-administered retirement plan for its employees . . . Over the years, this bank has been privileged to serve as trustee for pension funds instituted by many of the country's leading corporations in a wide variety of industries.

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step after the sound demonstration. Installations to drive seagoing vessels, where room and weight capacity for the necessary shielding are available, are looked upon by some observers as falling in this category. There cannot now be confident prediction of the time when industrial power derived by way of electricity from atomic energy will become significant in the total power output of the United States.

Now this is by no means a time-scale comparable to that of the atomic bomb. Competition in bomb building there was not, save the urgent pressure for speed against the unknown potentialities of the enemy. Keen and direct competition in power generation there is. Hence the comparative capital cost of a nuclear energy installation to make steam to drive a turbine to drive a generator, as against the capital cost of a conventional boiler installation fired by coal or oil, is a factor of the first importance.

How to make it work

To bring the energy released by the fissioning atom into a readily manipulated and transportable form, it is necessary to convert it into electrical energy. From nuclear to electrical energy is not a single step. The chain-reacting pile, or reactor, is in reality a furnace to produce steam. True, the fuel burned by this furnace is to all intents free of charge, but the furnace itself is still a pretty costly affair. Hence the central problem is that of bringing the capital cost down. Reactors now being designed will, when used as research tools, ultimately provide engineering and technical information for the design of a commercial installation.

This is no picture of gloom, however far it may be from some of the more rosy predictions. On the contrary, it is an encouraging and optimistic picture, for it shows that the nation's enormous investment is being handled in rigorous, hardheaded fashion. That is the best guarantee that when power from atomic energy finally becomes a significant factor, it will be fitted into the general economic structure without shock and dislocation.

There are immediate positive facts to back up a conviction of optimism concerning prospects for the domestic development of atomic energy. The Commission, through its agreements with contractors — including universities, foundations, major corporations, and smaller corporations — is purchasing for the government the unique skill of each: from universities and foundations research acumen, from corporations competence and imagination in the handling of large-scale affairs.

There is now developing, through the familiarity of increasing numbers of organizations with the work and the purposes of the Commission's operating

plants, a basic supplying industry. In future it can be counted on to supply the legion of components, special materials, buildings, shielding materials, instruments, controls, and so on, that will be needed as atomic power becomes a recognized element in our total economy.

Atoms for research

The chain-reacting pile is the most efficient known manufactory of radioisotopes, familiar under the name "tagged atoms," which are produced through placing suitable forms of stable elements, properly jacketed, in the pile to undergo irradiation for a proper length of time. Today, the limiting factor on utilization of materials thus rendered radioactive is the number of people qualified to use them safely and effectively. A decade ago, the materials were limited in supply by the number and production rate of cyclotrons.

The nuclear reactor is the equivalent of hundreds of cyclotrons in the production, for example, of carbon 14, which has lately been much in the news because of its value in biological studies, particularly of the process of photosynthesis on which plant life depends. The same holds true for other radioisotopes which can be manufactured by neutron bombardment. As tools of medicine, the radioisotopes have been compared to the microscope and the X-ray in importance.

Not the physics, but the politics, of the atom is plainly the central question to be settled. The primary emphasis of the work being done under the aegis of the United States Atomic Energy Commission at present is military. Chairman Lilienthal has made it plain that the United States is determined to maintain and strengthen its pre-eminent position not only in atomic energy generally, but in atomic weapons specifically, until such time as a sound system of international control has been established.

The logic of events — or the illogic of the political relationships of mankind — enforces such a decision. It necessarily delays the bringing of the atom fully to the peaceful service of men.

The United States through the Acheson-Lilienthal Report in March, 1946, through the formal plan presented by Mr. Baruch in June, 1946, through the efforts since then of Warren R. Austin and Frederick H. Osborn, through the recent appearances of Dr. Oppenheimer and Mr. Lilienthal, has placed before the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission proposals unique in that they are the only ones based on actual experience with atomic energy. The system of world control which we have urged on the nations and to which we stand ready to commit our own vast installations is no more rigorous than our self-imposed system of domestic control.

The ATLANTIC—General Federation of Women's Clubs

PRIZE of \$1000

divided between two winners



Mrs. J. Duane Squires
New London, New Hampshire



Miss Grace Williamson
Oxford, Alabama

THE ATLANTIC — General Federation \$1000 Prize Contest for the best paper on "The Schools I Want and How to Get Them" proved to be one of the most successful contests yet run. Over 1200 papers were submitted — all states (as well as Alaska and D. C.) being represented, with the exception of New Mexico, Nevada, and Delaware.

Edward Weeks, Editor of the *Atlantic*, acted as final judge. Had he been Solomon, he would have had to meet a most difficult situation. As Editor, he solved his problem by dividing the \$1000 Prize between the valuable and sprightly paper written by Miss Grace Williamson, of Europa Club, Oxford, Alabama, and the thought-provoking manuscript of Mrs. J. Duane Squires, of New London Woman's Club, New London, New Hampshire. Miss Williamson's paper appeared in the July *Atlantic*; Mrs. Squires's article will be published in September.

Ten Honorable Mentions:

- Mrs. A. E. Bernard**
Vineland Woman's Club, Vineland, New Jersey
- Miss Pauline V. Burkher**
Anchorage Woman's Club, Anchorage, Alaska
- Miss Margaret Haley Carpenter**
Norfolk Junior Woman's Club, Norfolk, Virginia
- Mrs. Louisa Randall Church**
Rhode Island Woman's Club, Lincoln, Rhode Island
- Mrs. Olive Clapham Edwards**
Clarksdale Woman's Club, Clarksdale, Mississippi
- Mrs. Ruth E. Husted**
Kinsley Woman's Club, Kinsley, Kansas
- Mrs. Mary Turner Johnson**
Country Woman's Club, Bristol, Wisconsin
- Mrs. Gladness W. Luce**
Altrurian Club, Springfield, Vermont
- Mrs. Robert B. Reynolds**
Shakespeare Club, Mobile, Alabama
- Mrs. Ruth V. Sipes**
Galesburg Woman's Club, Galesburg, Illinois

Congratulations . . .

to all the members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs who participated so ably in this important contest! Their suggestions on "The Schools I Want and How to Get Them" will undoubtedly prove of benefit to the cause of education throughout the United States.

THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



London

ENEMIES of the British Labor Government expected dissension or even a split at the annual convention of the Labor Party this year. Yet when the 1255 delegates, representing 3,800,000 organized workers, met for five days at the breezy seaside resort of Margate, discord melted under the soft sunshine.

The delegates came from workshops and factories, from Parliament, from bleak offices, and from local party branches throughout the country. These men and women of the British Labor movement — some in black coats and striped trousers, others with sleeves rolled up and shirt fronts open — were drawn together by the very adversity which their opponents thought would divide them.

For fifty years they and their fathers had been struggling to build this movement. Two years ago a general election flicked them into the seat of government with a generous majority in Parliament. At the Margate conference, no delegate was inclined to risk this hard-won power by rebelling on any major issue.

Almost throughout, the party's executive committee of twenty-seven had its own way. It was occasionally criticized and attacked from the floor. On one question it even suffered an awkward defeat. This was on the issue of equal pay for men and women.

In the most stirring episode of the convention, a frail, white-haired woman of seventy-five, Mrs. E. M. White, suffragette of another generation, humbled the party leadership and the Labor Government. Alone, by a moving speech, she swung the convention into a 4 to 1 ballot against its leaders and in favor of equal pay for women now. Several members of the executive committee, sitting on the platform, were so electrified by the old lady's impassioned demand for economic equality for her sex that they clapped excitedly as she denounced them.

For a quarter of a century the Labor Party had been calling for standard wage rates for the same job, regardless of sex. But the Government, while agreeing to the principle, refused to put equal pay into operation immediately. The cost would be the equivalent of \$120,000,000 a year if women's pay were to be raised to the male level in the national and local government services. That sum would be multiplied many times if equal pay were extended to industry and commerce.

At a time when the people's purchasing power is surpassing by \$4,000,000,000 annually the value of goods that can be bought on the home market, an all-around lift of women's incomes would increase the inflation threat.

So the Labor Party leadership, defying the convention's 4 to 1 vote for immediate equal pay, accepted the idea but declined to apply it now. Some delegates were dissatisfied that a Labor Government which can find £900,000,000 for the armed forces this year refused to spend one thirtieth of that sum to keep its promise to women workers.

Shift to the Right

Addressing the conference, Deputy Prime Minister Herbert Morrison went far out of his way to woo the middle class, managers and technicians, and even the employers. A few days earlier his colleague, Fuel Minister Emanuel Shinwell, had told a public meeting of electrical workers that the Government is supported by organized labor and that the rest don't matter a tinker's curse.

To erase the vote-losing remark of Shinwell, Herbert Morrison expressed sympathy for the middle class, whose incomes, he said, are often not higher than those of "workpeople." If Morrison's kind words for the *bourgeoisie* indicated a rightward trend, it was even more conspicuous that not a single delegate dis-

To People who want to write but can't get started

Do you have that constant urge to write but the fear that a beginner hasn't a chance? Then listen to what the former editor of *Liberty* said on this subject:

"There is more room for newcomers in the writing field today than ever before. Some of the greatest of writing men and women have passed from the scene in recent years. Who will take their places? Who will be the new Robert W. Chambers, Edgar Wallace, Rudyard Kipling? Fame, riches and the happiness of achievement await the new men and women of power."



NETS \$100 FROM WRITING AT Beginning of Course

"As a result of my N.I.A. training, in the last three months I have netted over \$100, and this is only the beginning. The first results came from phoning in newspaper tips to the various metropolitan newspapers in our area. Your course taught me how to recognize these values. This work resulted in my becoming the local correspondent for one of the papers. In addition, I have sold my first article to *Parents Magazine*. Although it was a short one on the children and their pets, I received \$25. With all the bad luck we have had, it has been a ray of sunshine." — Mrs. Patricia Peters, 9605 S. Melvina Ave., Oaklawn, Ill.

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LONDON (continued)

sented and several muttered agreement. Nor was he criticized for telling the delegates that until labor produces more goods to be bought, higher wages and shorter hours are useless.

Bevin wins

The convention dealt its hardest blow to the Left on foreign affairs. The group of rebels, led by Richard Crossman, took a terrific drubbing. Before the Margate conference opened, the party leaders had received assurance that the big unions would support Bevin's foreign policy, and their block vote controlled two thirds of the convention. Sunburned and with perspiration running down his face and blurring his horn-rimmed spectacles, Bevin coasted to an easy triumph.

Resolutions implicitly accusing Bevin of servility to capitalist America, opposing war preparedness against "either the United States or Russia," and condemning British support for the Truman Doctrine — in fact all resolutions except two which approved Bevin's policy — were either withdrawn or almost unanimously beaten by a show of hands after Bevin, drawing a handkerchief across his brow, sat down.

Attlee laid down the party line against the rebels, who have been clamoring that the British Labor Government is ganging up with the United States against Russia. The Prime Minister declared, "I utterly deny the charge made by some people whose subservience to one great power makes them charge us with subservience to another."

Aftermath of the blizzards

It has only lately become possible to survey the impact of last winter's blizzards on agriculture. The Government estimates that 4,188,000 sheep and lambs are dead, victims mainly of the February frost and snow and, to a smaller extent, of subsequent floods. This means the loss of 21 per cent of Britain's flocks. About 50,000 cattle were also frozen to death or drowned. Experts say five years will be needed to replace these sheep and cattle. The tight ration in Britain allows one as much meat in a week as a normal consumer eats in a day — about two chops or their equivalent.

Total direct and indirect cost is assessed at \$80,000,000. About 1½ million farmers and land workers were affected. The wheat crop is likely to be 550,000 acres below the 2½ million acreage which had been earmarked for the 1947 harvest. Potatoes destroyed amounted to 75,000 tons.

One casualty of the cold and blizzards passed almost unnoticed. That is the loss of wild birds. It is much more than a blow to folk who love to hear a thrush sing. It marks the disappearance of birds which protect crops against snails and other pests, and the cumulative effect is going to be felt.

The picture of a dying England being presented to the American public by some reports is grotesquely

distorted. True, the prospect for the next few years is not rosy. It will take several more years to achieve full recovery than was imagined. Food and clothes rationing will continue longer than was expected.

But there are impressive signs of the basic economic health of the nation. Herbert Morrison, no window-dresser, has stated with confidence, "Short-term setbacks there may be, but the long-term trend will be in the right direction. The coal industry is on its feet; the men and machines are coming forward and progress is in sight. The steel industry too is beginning to move in the right direction. These two are the foundations of our industrial strength."

In many respects the British industrial scene is better than after World War I. The national percentage of unemployment in 1922 was 14.9 per cent, but today it is 2 per cent. The number of houses built in the first two years after World War I was unofficially estimated at 12,000. This contrasts with 194,000 built during the corresponding period after Hitler's defeat.

Coal is the key

Run-down machinery, shortage of miners, weariness and inefficiency are holding back mining output. But recovery after the winter breakdown has been faster than expected. Coal output for 1947 will probably be 197 million tons, which is still 3 million below the essential minimum. But about 9 million tons of home-produced coal will be economized by industrial use of oil instead of coal, by forced cuts in electricity and gas consumption, and by small imports.

On May 1, the 700,000 coal miners in this newly nationalized industry were granted the five-day week, and it seems to be working well. The majority of miners, even with the shorter week, are working longer than before because there is much less absenteeism.

The Government has increased the allocation of coal to the steel plants. This became necessary because shortage of steel has been threatening to eclipse the coal shortage as the most troublesome blot on industrial recovery. Home production capacity is only four fifths of present steel needs.

Lack of steel is delaying shipbuilding, impeding motorcar manufacture, hampering growth of the whole capital goods industry, and retarding the housing program. In the last quarter of this year steel production is expected to reach the pre-war peak annual rate of 13 million tons. Despite the grave shortage of steel and timber, British shipbuilding is booming. In the first quarter of 1947, Britain produced 54 per cent of the whole world's new ships.

Besides the coal and steel deficiency, another major cause of the crisis is too little electricity. Electricity

production has almost doubled since 1938, but the larger load has to be carried by almost the same generating plant. The dilemma is likely to grow worse. But the Government now expects to manufacture in two years the electrical generators which were to have been made in three.

The gap between exports and imports

The British foreign trade position is disquieting. While exports are now just above the level at which they stood before the fuel crisis, they are still being dangerously outrun by imports. In February the Cabinet set an export target of 140 per cent of the 1938 volume, to be reached by the end of this year, as compared with 111 per cent during the last quarter of 1946. The Government had contemplated a 150 per cent goal but during the blizzards reduced this to 140 per cent. It is now extremely improbable that even this more modest volume will be reached.

The imperative need to sell more and more abroad, and to import less, means that the British must go on eating tedious food, must be rationed to half the garments they used to buy before the war, and must resign themselves to doing without consumer's articles which would make everyone's life more comfortable.

Of all workers in British manufacturing industries before the war (June, 1939), 14 per cent were producing for export. Today that ratio is up to 21 per cent and still rising.

It is no calamity when the Briton who likes a drink, but can't buy one, learns that British whiskey exports to the hard-currency countries, mostly to the United States, are now being increased by \$20,000,000. It is more serious when you are unable adequately to clothe your wife, children, and yourself because textiles are a primary export bringing the foreign currency which England needs to keep alive.

If Secretary Marshall's proposals for European reconstruction are successful, Britain's dollar crisis will be eased. One other eventuality, besides the Marshall Plan, would help: a mild recession in the United States. A major United States slump would be disastrous for Britain and the world. America would then reduce her buying abroad, depriving other countries of the money with which to buy British products. British sales to other nations would be hit.

But a little slithering of American prices, say a drop of 15 per cent, would make the American loan to Britain last longer and enable the British to buy more food and raw material. It would be a slight compensation for the 40 per cent rise in American prices since the loan was negotiated. A gentle recession in the United States could be the occasion for a thanksgiving service in Westminster Abbey.

THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



The Far East

IN India, Britain has exchanged a weakening British rule for a position, in some ways stronger, as arbiter between Indian factions which are not quite sure of the strength and distribution of their backing. Britain's economic position, though weak relative to that of the United States, remains strong relative to India's. The key to this position is the sterling balance owed to India by Britain. India, unlike China and the rest of colonial Asia, was neither occupied nor blockaded by Japan during the war.

Britain drew heavily on India for supplies and manpower, with the result that India's ancient debt to Britain was wiped out, while Britain ran into debt to an amount which some British sources contend to be less than five billion dollars, but which Indians claim to be much more.

The importance of this money is not to be estimated by averaging it out at a per capita rate of some \$15 owed by Britain to each Indian in a population of approximately 400 million. The money means more to some Indians than it does to all Indians.

It lumps up into huge credits, most of which will eventually accrue to those who control India's industries, raw materials, and grain. It is, however, much too large a sum to be paid back freely. It is a blocked credit, because Britain does not have that much money. Its eventual flow back to India must be controlled by negotiation.

Britain stands in a better position to negotiate with the representatives of the Indians who will eventually get most of the money than with the statistical mass of the "average" Indian. Gandhi, Nehru, and Jinnah alike, though they often appear to Americans to be doctrinaire, intransigent, or fanatical, are regarded by the British as the natural agents of compromise.

Though they represent ideals of nationalism and full independence, they also represent the interests of those Indians who will gain most by arrangements which will enable Britain to earn the money to pay off the blocked sterling balances. The Indian National Congress is financed principally by Indian industrialists, and the Moslem League principally by landowners.

The Dutch and the Indonesians

The economic factor which works out as a compromise in India proves to be a bone of contention in Indonesia. Here, during the war, great stocks of exportable produce accumulated, which lack of shipping prevented the Japanese from carrying off.

Britain, impoverished by the war, puts pressure on the Indians to negotiate by reducing her imperial commitments and thus increasing the economic as well as the political responsibilities of India's political spokesmen. Holland, impoverished by the war, sees wealth in sight if Dutch authority can re-establish itself in Indonesia. For months now the Indonesian Republic has been trying to finance itself by shipping out stock-piled produce.

The Dutch, in their efforts to force the Republic into political retreat, have blockaded the islands to prevent trade. By so doing, however, the Dutch have created a situation in which the hopes of all Indonesians stand or fall together, and it is this that accounts for the continuing militant appeal of the Indonesian leaders to the rank and file.

This situation also accounts for the extraordinary bitterness of the colonial Dutch toward Britain. The Dutch, trying to get hold of actual goods while the British are negotiating about credits, feel that they were let down when Britain refused to continue military action in Indonesia on their behalf.

The British, for their part, are made nervous by the way the Dutch military hanker for action. They are sure that an attempt at military reconquest would make the Indonesians more militant and more radical, and that if Indonesia were to burst into flames, the fire would spread into Malaya, Burma, and India.

The drain on Holland

American policy has unostentatiously but firmly swung in behind the British. America sees no need for the complete rehabilitation of Dutch authority as a prerequisite to the resumption of trade with Indonesia. The goods are there for America to buy, the markets are there for America to sell, and Indonesian leaders have shown as much capability and responsibility as America is accustomed to find in most Latin American countries.

Native Communism is not widespread. Russian influence could hardly be more remote. A savage colonial war, however, might make the Communists more radical and would certainly make all militant nationalists look longingly toward Russia.

Division of opinion between the extremist Dutch and the moderate Dutch has been carried back to the homeland. Holland has built up a force of about 100,000 in Indonesia — an enormous effort for so small a country. In proportion to population this is equivalent to an American overseas army of something like a million and a half.

The drain on Holland inevitably has begun to tell. The Dutch Labor Party, which as a middle-of-the-road party lost heavily to the Left in the elections, has been forced to take a somewhat more radical position. It passed a resolution which, though worded so diplomatically that it could be quoted with approval by both the Dutch and the Indonesian radios, advocated reduction of Dutch armed forces, recall of Dutch officials who had fostered an anti-Republic puppet party in Republican territory, and moderation of the bellicose tone of the Dutch Information Service in Indonesia.

The resolution was more important than appeared on the surface, because the Labor Party has been participating in the Dutch government through a somewhat shaky coalition with the more conservative Catholic Party, which would like to send its own nominee to Indonesia as Governor-General to conduct a more forceful policy.

The Kuomintang loses ground

In China, alarmist reports of the coming "collapse" of the Kuomintang may be discounted. As long as the Kuomintang holds the major seaports, it will receive enough arms and aid to survive, if only as a lever through which American policy can influence

the composition and character of the future government of China.

This new government will inevitably be a compromise government. The question is, What kind of compromise? As its power declines and it becomes less able to pose as a government of all China, the Kuomintang inevitably emphasizes the ascendancy of Russia in Sinkiang, Mongolia, and Manchuria. To place this emphasis on the consequences of the Kuomintang's unwillingness to compromise is to invite the partition of China into spheres of Russian and American control.

No such partition is necessary, nor is it desirable from the point of view of American policy. The American interest lies not in preponderant trade and investment in partitioned areas, but in the widest possible trade and investment in unpartitioned areas.

In the present situation in China, territorial disintegration is even more important than political disintegration. By refusing to compromise, especially on agrarian reform, the Kuomintang has weakened itself in its struggle with the Communists, presenting them with the highly advantageous leadership of a coalition of true communists, agrarian reformers who are demanding — and getting — redistribution of land as private property, not collectivized property, and growing numbers of merchants, small-scale private producers, and educated intelligentsia.

As the government weakens in the struggle with the Communists, it weakens also in its ability to control any kind of separatism. Outlying provinces in the northwest, west, and south tend to become self-governing areas, remitting less and less revenue to the National Government.

Manchuria for China

This territorial disintegration will in due course produce a demand for reintegration. The way will then be open for the reunification of China on the basis of a federal union of territories, each of which will surrender certain functions to a new central government but will retain a certain number of political and economic functions of its own. A federal union of this kind will prove to be much more practical than a "coalition" of two militant parties, each of which thoroughly distrusts the other.

This situation, which is already beginning to develop, will be more amenable to American policy than was the original Kuomintang-Communist deadlock with which General Marshall wrestled in vain. The fear of Russian ascendancy in the north should not be exaggerated. Sinkiang and Mongolia, whose populations are overwhelmingly non-Chinese

1946

1947

Atlantic Prizes

to High School and Private School Students

The Atlantic Contests for High School and Private School Students for 1946-1947 (*closing date April 10*) were open to all students using the Atlantic in a course during some part of the 1946-1947 school year.

Essay Contest

PRIZE—\$25.00

Chiaroscuro, by Constance Towson, Laurel School, Shaker Heights, Ohio; *Ethel Andrews, Instructor.*

HONORABLE MENTION

The Way He Likes to Grow, by Susan Savage, Kent Place School, Summit, New Jersey; *Florence E. Wolfe, Instructor.*

Winter Interlude, by Carol Wunderlich, Lewis and Clark High School, Spokane, Washington; *Marian Pettis, Instructor.*

On the Conestoga Wagon, by J. William Keyes, Jr., Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia; *Irvin C. Poley, Instructor.*

Story Contest

PRIZE—\$25.00

The Agate, by Shirley Bridge, West High School, Minneapolis; *Wanda Orton, Instructor.*

HONORABLE MENTION

Tangled Web, by Lucia P. Pierce, Waynflete School, Portland, Maine; *Betty B. van Baaren, Instructor.*

Sometimes I Wonder, by Gloria Prudden, Westover School, Middlebury, Connecticut; *Elizabeth H. Kellogg, Instructor.*

Cherries Out of Season, by Paulette Dougherty, The Chapin School, New York City; *Corinne L. Olli, Instructor.*

Poetry Contest

PRIZE—\$25.00

Georgia Lynchin', by Evelyn Moore, Sunset Hill School, Kansas City, Missouri; *Margaret Radcliffe, Instructor.*

HONORABLE MENTION

Thanatopsis: 1947, by Richard H. Nelson, U. S. Grant High School, Portland, Oregon; *Lydia L. Anderson, Instructor.*

The Battle of Agincourt, by Hope Gilson, Bancroft School, Worcester, Massachusetts; *Dorothy T. Peckham, Instructor.*

Idyl of the Gorge, by Richard H. Nelson, U. S. Grant High School, Portland, Oregon; *Lydia L. Anderson, Instructor.*

Disillusionment, by Brenda McCauley, Mt. Lebanon High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; *Virginia A. Elliott, Instructor.*

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The University of Pittsburgh,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

announces the award of a Four-Year Scholarship (free tuition) to Shirley Bridge, West High School, Minneapolis (*Wanda Orton, instructor*), for her story, **The Agate**.

THE FAR EAST (*continued*)

and non-Russian, will always be buffers between the Chinese and the Russians. They do not properly belong within the scope of Chinese domestic policies. Manchuria does.

Manchuria is as overwhelmingly Chinese as Sinkiang is non-Chinese, and any attempt by Russia to detach Manchuria from the rest of China would turn against the Russians the nationalism not only of the Chinese south of the Great Wall, but of the Manchurian Chinese as well.

The Chinese of Manchuria are men of tough fiber. Their basic political concept has long been one of federal union with China. They have always resisted control by any Chinese government in which they were not strongly represented. Nor do they want to be independent. They want to be part of a China in whose government their representation is proportionate to their wealth in natural resources, their industrial superiority to the rest of China, and their strategic importance.

Trade with Russia

Manchuria, because of its modern communications, can send out more exports and take in more imports than any other area of equal size in China. But Manchuria can trade with the rest of China only to the extent that China south of the Great Wall becomes peaceful and stable enough to develop similar communications and a similar ability to export and import.

Until then Manchuria will trade with Siberia by necessity. Rail and river communications are good, and Siberia has an increasing capacity to consume food and raw materials from Manchuria, and to export the consumer goods which Manchuria needs.

These considerations add up to a clear indication of what American policy should be. We do not want the association of Manchuria with Siberia to be too close or exclusive. It is to our interest to develop the trade of Manchuria with the rest of China, and the trade of China as a whole with America. We can best promote this interest by promoting an all-round, negotiated, federal unification of China, leading to increased Chinese domestic trade and an increasing import and export trade.

New power in Asia

As the new centers of gravity in Asia emerge, it becomes clearer that Korea, Japan, and the Philippines are not true centers of gravity. They are holding points. Of the three, Japan is the most important; but even as a holding point Japan offers the appearance rather than the reality of power.

Too much has to be put into Japan, which is deficient in raw materials. Either the raw materials have to be brought from outside of Asia, at uneconomic expense, or they have to be brought from Asia. But to bring them from Asia, the peace, prosperity, and trade of Asia have to be restored.

THE ATLANTIC REPORT

ON THE WORLD TODAY



Washington

HARSH words can be heard on the Hill about Mr. Truman's veto of the labor bill. The fear is that Congress may reciprocate by lack of coöperation in foreign affairs. The Marshall Plan for continental aid in Europe, announced at Harvard on June 5, will call for Congressional financing, and a lot of it. Has the President prejudiced legislative support by his assault on Congress? Even before he delivered his attack, bipartisan coöperation was wearing thin, and Vandenberg statesmanship was being tested to the limit.

Preparation of the ground for the Marshall Plan is going on apace. The President, in adopting the Vandenberg suggestion of a bipartisan study group, has appointed a well-rounded and distinguished group of men. In Washington the feeling is that Americans must keep out of the preliminary discussions in Europe. These discussions will assess the needs of reconstruction and the resources available in Europe to meet them.

Selling the Marshall Plan

There is bound to be some trouble in selling reconstruction in Europe as an undertaking outside the scope of the United Nations. It is said that use should be made of the UN Economic Commission for Europe. But Secretary Marshall's idea is that a scheme or schemes should emanate from Europeans only. And the European Commission includes an American delegation. It is not intended, however, to by-pass the United Nations. The prevailing thought is that the scheme or schemes coming out of Europe should be referred to the European Commission as well as to Washington.

Reaction against Russian obstructionism in the United Nations accounted for the original Truman message on aid to Greece and Turkey. The President was himself responsible for the bald statement in his Truman Doctrine: "The United Nations and its

related organizations are not in a position to extend help of the kind that is required." His advisers wanted the insertion of "as yet." But the President insisted on the flat statement. This indicates the disillusion in the Capital about the United Nations.

Where the Administration erred was in thinking that the disillusion extended to the American people. At any rate, the slighting mention of the United Nations in the Truman Doctrine elicited widespread protests from the country. Senator Vandenberg rectified the matter by making the link between aid to Greece and the United Nations. Now the State Department is more circumspect. Anything which may have even a remote connection with the United Nations is referred to the Department's Office of Special Political Affairs for comment.

This office deals with United Nations affairs. It is a sort of backstop for Warren R. Austin, our United Nations delegate. That the branch rates only the status of an office in the State Department has long been a sore point with pro-UN Americans. They would like to see an Assistant Secretary of State for United Nations Affairs. The suggestion, indeed, was made that the new Assistant Secretary, Norman Armour, who will look after all the geographical desks, should be called Assistant Secretary for United Nations Affairs.

The need of tax revision

At the Treasury the experts are hard at work on tax revision. Secretary Snyder thinks this is a unique opportunity for modernizing the Federal tax structure. Like Topsy, this structure has "grewed," and there is increasingly less administrative sense in it. Corporate taxation is due for an overhaul to get rid of such abuses as double taxation and discrimination between corporations on the one hand and proprietorships and partnerships on the other.

Change is also needed in personal income taxation. The citizens of thirty-five states are envious of the tax advantage enjoyed in the thirteen community property states by married couples who may split their joint incomes for tax purposes. This inequity, which would have been corrected in the shelved Lucas bill, is very much on Treasury minds.

The cost of generalizing a split would mean the loss of a billion dollars. Whether the Treasury favors ending the discrimination this way or by putting the community property states on a par with the others still has to be decided. The latter method would, of course, raise and not sacrifice revenue. Finally, the Federal excises need to be knit together into a coherent system.

Few reforms are more important than tax revision. It was in part because of the need for wholesale revision that tax reduction was successfully vetoed by the President. The other reason is that we are still in a period of war finance. Next year many war items will not be included in the budget, and Secretary Snyder looks forward to tax reduction in addition to tax readjustment.

But the Administration's recommendations in this respect will not follow the pattern of Republican schemes. The Republicans failed to recognize that war taxes were placed principally in the low and middle income brackets. Here is where relief will be proposed by the Administration, for Mr. Truman believes that if we are to use the vast production potential we developed during the war, we need to distribute our tax burden in a way that will promote mass consumption.

Wanted: good administrators

The President has again bemoaned his difficulty in obtaining competent men to work for the government. Granted that Americans don't respond readily to the demand for their services. However, there are reasons for this reluctance apart from personal disinclination to leave private employment, and the President himself cannot escape some responsibility. They are pointed up by several illustrations of the cavalier treatment that nominees get from both the White House and Congress.

One illustration is the President's withdrawal of his own nomination of Commissioner Wakefield for reappointment to the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Wakefield has an excellent record. He was backed by both Senators from his own state of California. The nomination was referred to an Interstate and Foreign Service subcommittee, which, according to reports, was prepared to report it favorably. Action, however, was stopped by Presidential withdrawal of the nomination in favor of Representative Jones of Ohio. Mr. Wakefield was not even

informed of his fall from grace at the White House. It is charged that jobbery is involved. How can good men risk this sort of humiliation in the public service?

Candidates for government office too often are humiliated by Congress, as in the case of Mr. Lilienthal. There is a more recent example. Mr. Philip Perlman was nominated for the Solicitor Generalship as far back as January 31. Hearings were not held until mid-May. The last hearing took place on June 17.

Evidence indicates that the subcommittee is stalling. Yet here is a job the occupant of which prepares the government's cases for presentation to the Supreme Court. By special provision of law, moreover, he exercises all the duties of the Attorney General in case of his absence or disability. Lack of action in the Senate obviously disrupts the organization and operation of the Justice Department. How can men say yes to Presidential proffers when they run the risk of becoming the victims of politicking?

This is a very grave problem that is being more and more aired — this problem of Congressional procrastination over Presidential appointments. It clearly stems from Republican politics. By the end of June not more than one of Mr. Truman's appointees to postmasterships (numbering more than 800) since the first of the year had been confirmed. Representative Tinkham used to call this kind of thing sidewalk politics. It is playing hob with government efficiency and is one of the reasons that Mr. Truman finds it hard to persuade competent men to enter the government.

THE MOOD OF THE CAPITAL

The mood of the Capital is one with the domestic dissension produced by the Executive-Legislative row over the labor act. Keeping a watchful eye on the administration of the act is a Congressional preoccupation.

Congress is phobic about Communism — so anti-Communist that never since the Mitchell Palmer witch-hunt after the last war has there been such a strain on our civil liberties. The Rees bill, for instance, would go far beyond the loyalty test of Federal employes set in motion by the President. Our indulgence of the antics of the Committee on Un-American Activities sometimes passes understanding.

No man is more zealous than Secretary Marshall in deprecating this anti-Communist approach to our foreign policy. He himself will certainly not dress his proposal up as an anti-Communist crusade. But its acceptance by Congress and by the people will require some highly skillful maneuvering.

ATLANTIC

Repartee

LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

"What Price Preparedness?"

Sir:

I just could not believe my own eyes when reading "What Price Preparedness?" by Cord Meyer, Jr., in the June *Atlantic*. In these times of Red scares, and with Russia blamed for everything, that you had the courage to publish such a wonderful article is really remarkable. Congratulations a thousand times.

DR. ALOIS CIBULKA
*President, RST Engineering Company
Highlands, Tex.*

Sir:

To Cord Meyer, Jr.: AMEN!

N. A. COULTER, JR.
*U. S. Army, 1941-1945
Harvard Medical School
Boston, Mass.*

Sir:

The article "What Price Preparedness?" is so convincing that I should like to send it to my representatives in Congress in an effort to persuade them to vote against the proposed Military Training bill.

IVAN VON AUW
Wellesley, Mass.

Sir:

The article by Cord Meyer, Jr., should be broadcast to every home the world over. Every American should read it.

MARJORIE S. ROGERS
South Euclid, Ohio

Sir:

Thank you for the article "What Price Preparedness?" It is logical, realistic, and terrifying, and should be required reading for all our legislators and officials in Washington and elsewhere.

BERTHA L. BROOMELL
Buck Hill Falls, Pa.

Sir:

Just a word to express my admiration for the courageous article "What Price Preparedness?"

IRVING ZIEMAN
Boston, Mass.

Sir:

Reading of the article "What Price Preparedness?" brings up the question, Is the *Atlantic* a vehicle for the advancement of Communistic aims in the United States?

Over a period of time I have noticed that both in the *Atlantic Reports* and in contributed articles you seldom, if ever, print anything critical of Russia but you never hesitate to be quite critical of both the motives and acts of the United States.

Now just where does your allegiance lie?

MERLE H. MERTZ
Lima, Ohio

Sir:

For relentless logic and sheer lucidity "What Price Preparedness?" is remarkable. Congratulations!

CHARLES WALKER
*College Secretary
American Friends Service Committee*

Sir:

Thank you for the sensible article "What Price Preparedness?" The only alternative to the slavery of preparedness which Mr. Meyer depicts is the freedom of unpreparedness. Disarmament, while risky, offers less risk than arming ourselves with atomic bombs. It seems to me that if we were disarmed and our borders were open to all, America would gradually absorb into our economic life all so-called "enemies" who might choose to come to America as a result of marriage or association with American ideals, as China has done in the past with attackers.

GILBERT COPE
West Chester, Pa.

Sir:

"What Price Preparedness?" is surely one of the most notable magazine articles to appear in the United States since the war. It should be read by every American who is susceptible to the persuasions of clear logic.

REO M. CHRISTENSON
Loma Linda, Cal.

The Atlantic Reports

Sir:

For a long time I have been wanting to congratulate you on the Atlantic Reports on the Far East. They are obviously written by an authority of great stature who knows both Asia and the world. He, or she, combines objectivity, a knowledge of history, and discernment enough to know what is really happening beneath the surface in the minds of the peoples of Asia. I wish to commend you for the very great service which the *Atlantic* is rendering the American public in carrying these Reports.

I cannot close without adding my admiration for your own distinguished work in making the *Atlantic* indispensable to thoughtful Americans and to people of other countries who want to familiarize themselves with American writing at its best.

EDWARD C. CARTER
New York City

Sir:

I have read the *Atlantic* for many years, and had I read nothing other than the Atlantic Reports, I would consider these worth the price of the subscription. I am particularly interested in, and have often been assisted by, the Atlantic Reports dealing with Latin America, because I have lived there for a quarter of a century.

R. M. BEASLEY
La Lima, Honduras

Sir:

I am coming back on leave to France, but I want to remain on your lists.

I am reading cover to cover your so interesting magazine. I beg to acknowledge specially about general articles on Far East. Your information on Japan and China is excellent. I was in that area for twenty years and I know something about it. Your information about Europe is magnificently broad-minded and in many cases I had opportunities to explain American point of view, using the *Atlantic*.

H. G. S. MORIN
Direction des Instituts Pasteur d'Indochine
Dalat, Annam, Indo-China

Mr. Toynbee's Sentences

Sir:

How did an article like "Civilization on Trial" by Arnold Toynbee in the June *Atlantic* get by the

editor? Maybe Mr. Toynbee had an idea but he failed to put it across. He may be an eminent historian as you say; but, if so, he illustrates what is wrong with historians. History doesn't have to be boring, but I wager Mr. Toynbee's audience would go to sleep from boredom or sheer weariness from the mental effort required to follow through on his verbose sentences.

Take, for example, the first sentence in part 3: "To take the four other surviving civilizations first: if the firmness of a civilization's foothold on the continent — by which I mean the solid land-mass of Asia — may be taken as giving a rough indication of that civilization's relative expectation of life, then the other four surviving civilizations are 'better lives' — in the jargon of the life insurance business — than our own Western Christendom."

Now isn't that some sentence — all 64 words of it? And don't think that is an exception. There are 8 other sentences with words numbering in the 60's, 5 in the 70's, a whopper of 83, and a super-whopper of 100 words. I reread the article to see if it was as bad as my first impression. It was. Then I compiled a few statistics.

Words per sentence	Number of sentences	Number of words
Under 10	4	30
10-19	35	504
20-29	23	552
30-39	21	709
40-49	14	624
50-59	8	433
60-69	9	559
70-79	5	363
83	1	83
100	1	100
TOTALS	121	3957

The average number of words per sentence is thus 33. About half of the number of sentences (59) are over 30 words, but 70 per cent of the words are in those sentences. The shorter sentences comprise only 30 per cent of the writing.

Long sentences of themselves are not objectionable, but long sentences so loosely constructed as to make one hunt for the central idea are objectionable. For sheer verbosity, poor sentence structure, and haziness of idea, this article should have been consigned to the wastebasket. It should not have been allowed to disgrace the pages of my still "favorite and best" magazine.

V. E. COLYER
Pleasant Ridge, Mich.

Feeding the World

Sir:

Rarely have I read in a journal of the stature of the *Atlantic* as cockeyed an article as the one by Douglas Dickins ("A Thousand Rupees for a Life," June *Atlantic*). Your editorial note does not

tell what his civil status was before he joined the RAF, but I'll bet a dollar to an anna that he was an economist. It is such thinking as his, carrying much weight in national and international affairs and ignoring the fact that man lives on a biological as well as an economic level, that is virtually guaranteeing the failure of current efforts to achieve world peace.

Malthus is indeed dead. But hundreds of thousands of square miles of overcrowded lands today bear tragic witness to the soundness of his theories. And in no part of the world should this be more obvious than in India. The growth of India's population since 1872 is not 30 per cent, as Mr. Dickins states, but, according to the best statistics available, in the order of more than 100 per cent. According to Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, formerly of Madras University and the University of Pennsylvania, India's population in 1881 was 250,125,000. Today it is probably 420,000,000. To fill 420,000,000 empty stomachs, increasing at the rate of nearly 14,000 a day, Dr. Chandrasekhar estimates that there are 432,000,000 cultivable acres (*India's Population*, Asia Press, New York, 1946). Millions of these acres are on the Deccan Plateau, the highly erodable slopes of which are so subject to climatic vagaries that a considerable portion of them must be considered marginal for agriculture. The northwestern desert is advancing at the rate of hundreds of square miles a year.

"Cultivable land" is in itself a meaningless term except in relation to a host of factors such as the technical skill of the people doing the cultivation, climatic stability, surplus wealth with which to buy fertilizer, and so forth. An acre can produce at most only a certain number of pounds of fats, proteins, carbohydrates, and fibers. Rarely is this potential realized, and in the case of India it is a safe assumption that production is falling because of land abuse and mounting pressures.

Before India increases the number of her empty stomachs to a half billion, there are certain to be serious famines. As I have pointed out elsewhere, the people of India breed with the irresponsibility of codfish and, when famine comes, whine that the rest of the world must feed them. Even if a major proportion of world shipping were devoted to sending food to India, it would be impossible to cope with this unrestrained spawning. Even if the rest of the world were willing to buy goods made by India's coolie population at coolie prices, there would not be enough food in the world to keep up with this inordinate increase. According to American nutritionists, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of arable land per capita are required to maintain a decent living standard. Some American authorities estimate the total arable land of the world at some 4,000,000,000 acres, to feed 2,250,000,000 people. My own extensive foreign experience makes me think that Frank A. Pearson's estimate (*The*

World's Hunger, Cornell University Press, 1945) of 2,580,000,000 acres is much nearer actuality.

WILLIAM VOGT
Washington, D.C.

I Personally —

Sir:

May I convey my thanks and appreciation, as a monthly reader of the *Atlantic*, for your publishing the article on the American Legion by Bill Mauldin ("Poppa Knows Best," April *Atlantic*) and the article by Charles Bolté on the AVC ("We're on Our Own," May *Atlantic*). By printing these articles and many others, the *Atlantic* shows that a free press still exists in the United States.

WALTER ISAAC
Fairbanks, Alaska

Sir:

I wish to record my conviction that your publication of the article by David Cushman Coyle in the June issue ("The Big Cannot Be Free") is an insult to the intelligence of your readers.

FRED E. PARK
Adrian, Mich.

Sir:

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the article in the June *Atlantic* by David Cushman Coyle. We certainly need more straightforward thinking like this.

LOUIS FABIAN BACHRACH
Newton, Mass.

Sir:

In the authors of the four published answers (June *Atlantic*) to Mrs. Cyrus's article "Why Mothers Fail" (March *Atlantic*), I found a common trait: Mrs. Wilber writes short stories and poems she "may some day get the courage to send to a publisher"; Mrs. Van Buskirk "wanted to write professionally"; Mrs. Nathan has "plans for exceeding Eudora Welty"; Mrs. Drury is a professional writer.

Perhaps it is greatly significant that each of these housewives feels an urgent need to create something more surely expressive of her own personality than a child, more intellectual than an attractive centerpiece, more lasting than a pudding.

MARIA K. SMITH
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Sir:

The *Atlantic* gets better and better. In the Netherland-America Foundation's Book Drive for Holland last month we specified the *Atlantic* as one of the few magazines desired, and received a wonderful response, so the Dutch will soon be enjoying their copies.

MRS. R. G. ERVIN
Washington, D.C.



COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Taking moving pictures of human vocal cords

SAY "AH-H-H" TO THE BIRDIE . . . *This Bell Telephone Laboratories scientist is taking moving pictures of the young woman's vocal cords, to get new knowledge about the voice. Such knowledge is useful in telephone transmitter design.*

He is using a Fastax camera, developed by the Laboratories. This camera, the same kind that was used to photograph atom-bomb tests at Bikini, can operate up to the rate of 8000 pictures a second.

Bell Telephone Laboratories learned some interesting things about speech from high-speed pictures of vocal cords.

THE job of Bell Laboratories is to devise and develop facilities which will enable two human beings anywhere in the world to talk to each other as clearly as if they were face to face—and to do this economically as well as efficiently. To this end, Bell Laboratories study everything

from the most fundamental matters, such as the mechanism of speech and hearing and the molecular structure of copper wire and rubber insulation, to the detailed design of equipment. The result is better service, at lower cost, for everyone who uses the telephone.



BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

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CAN WE AID EUROPE?

by N. R. DANIELIAN

SECRETARY MARSHALL has proclaimed that we will help Europe if Europe will help itself. From the evidence before us we know that since V-E Day, despite our generosity, our economic aid abroad has been ineffective. The question remains as to what form our future help will take.

There has been no lack of information within the government about post-war conditions abroad: witness Adlai Stevenson's on-the-spot investigations of conditions in Italy in 1944; Sam Rosenman's reports on France to President Truman early in 1945; Ken Galbraith's exhaustive surveys of conditions in Germany; Herbert Hoover's world food survey in 1946; and Hoover's and Paul Porter's more recent accounts of conditions in Germany, Austria, and Greece; not to mention Herbert Lehman's pleas and Fiorello La Guardia's dramatic campaign. Europe is devastated, disorganized, and abject — ready for convulsive revolution unless assisted to its feet by adequate aid and organization.

This was and is the second battle for Europe, the battle for freedom from want, the battle, in fact, against revolution — call it Communism if you wish — which started after V-J Day. But for delicacy of taste or a lingering hope of despair, one

would be justified in calling this the beginning of World War III. Just as the economic depression and disorganization of 1929–1933 led inexorably to the mobilization of Europe under dictatorships with aggressive designs, the conditions after victory in Europe and Asia, incomparably worse than during the depression of the 1930's, provide fertile ground for mass hypnosis, which may again lead to goose-stepping mobilization under a new and equally threatening dictatorship.

This danger was foreseen and anticipated by many in the Administration, even before the last shot was fired, and through 1944 and 1945 steps were taken to relieve the pressure of economic destitution.

One and all realized, of course, that immediately after the war there would be a gigantic relief problem to alleviate suffering from hunger, malnutrition, disease, and displacement of persons. The first step, necessarily, was to ship food and medical supplies to meet urgent distress. The second stage, and not too far behind the first, was conceived as rehabilitation and restoration of public services such as transportation, electric power, communications, and, to some extent, agriculture through the supply of seed and fertilizers. These two activities were expected to take a period of two years and would act as the restorative impulse during the transition. The third and fourth acts of this well-planned drama focused attention on the longer-range reconstruction problems of world economy. These would be accomplished by the stabilization of intercurrency ex-

After teaching at Harvard, N. R. DANIELIAN spent three years with the Federal Communications Commission. For two years he worked as an assistant to Senator Robert La Follette, Jr., for another two years with the Foreign Economic Administration, and he has long been associated with the Department of Commerce and the Department of State on such conservation projects as the St. Lawrence development. He is today the President of the American International Service Company in Washington.

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changes between the moneys of various countries through the International Monetary Fund, and by the encouragement of reconstruction and development over a period of years through the International Bank.

Since V-E Day the United States government has contributed or earmarked over 23 billion dollars for economic aid in international relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. This is an amount surpassing the cost of all United States war plants built by the government through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation during the four years of war. It exceeds in book value all the properties of General Motors, General Electric, International Harvester, Westinghouse Electric, Du Pont, plus the Bell Telephone System, the New York Central, the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Southern Pacific, and the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe!

Our generous contribution has been made through a welter of institutions which the Congress has created and approved without partisanship. Let us call the roster of United States allotments since 1944, up to June, 1947: —

UNRRA	\$2,700,000,000
Military Relief, Occupied Areas ¹ .	3,000,000,000
Post V-J Day Lend-Lease ²	2,500,000,000
Export-Import Bank	2,800,000,000
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	3,175,000,000
International Monetary Fund	2,750,000,000
British Loan	3,750,000,000
Surplus Property Credits	1,000,000,000
International Relief	350,000,000
Greek-Turkish Aid	400,000,000
Philippine Credit and Grants ³	700,000,000
Merchant Ship Credits	150,000,000
International Refugee Organization	75,000,000
TOTAL	\$23,350,000,000

No one can say that the American people have been either niggardly or laggard in their humane responsibilities. At no other time in world history has a victor assumed the responsibility for reconstruction of war's ravages in such generous portion. We had the blueprints all right, and we put up the money.

But something has gone askew. Two years after the war the world is in a worse economic mess than during the fighting, and President Truman, the State Department, and their emissaries of mercy, former President Herbert Hoover, Secretary Mar-

¹ Includes latest appropriation of \$725,000,000 for fiscal year 1947-1948.

² Exclusive of "pipeline" goods sold through long-term Export-Import Bank loans. Lend-lease grants — 1.1 billions; Lend-lease credits — 1.4 billions.

³ Grants under Philippine Rehabilitation Act of 1946 — 620 millions plus; credit — 75 millions.

shall, and others are back on Capitol Hill asking for new and equally generous grants. The ravages of economic destitution have spread like the plague over wider areas, with the simple yardstick of caloric intake of food in a large part of Europe and Asia below starvation levels, even worse than under enemy occupation during the war. And the light of freedom flickers with diminishing brightness. Where did we fail?

UNRRA: policy and practice

No one can deny that the 3.7 billions spent by UNRRA in two years, of which the United States paid out 2.7 billions, was an essential contribution to alleviation of human suffering in the wake of war. The lack of permanent improvement in the general economic condition of recipient countries is not due to maladministration or lack of resources. It is no use finding fault with the direction of Herbert Lehman and Fiorello La Guardia. The shortcomings of the relief program were inherent in the enabling legislation of the Congress and in policies adopted at the first meeting of the UNRRA Council in Atlantic City in November, 1943.

Two limitations are worth mentioning, for they set the pattern of relief activities and are primarily responsible for the ephemeral character of the results: the insistence of Congress that the scope of UNRRA's efforts be restricted to relief (instead of relief and reconstruction); and the stricture of the UNRRA Council that all aid should be rendered through the governments of recipient countries.

In the organic articles of UNRRA, as well as the House and Senate hearings on the initial authorization, it was made very clear that the first United States appropriation of 1.35 billions authorized in 1944, and the subsequent allotments, would be devoted solely to relief. At the instance of the United States representatives on the UNRRA Council, Resolution Number 12 specified: —

The task of rehabilitation must not be considered as the beginning of reconstruction — *it is coterminous with relief*. . . . The Administration cannot be called upon to help restore continuous employment in the world. (Italics supplied)

In the hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, members of the Committee and witnesses put even narrower definitions upon this resolution. For instance, Under Secretary Acheson was led to agree that rehabilitation and reconstruction would not include rebuilding of the devastations of war. "That," he said, "is altogether beyond the scope of this organization," and with that kind of activity "this organization has nothing to do." In

connection with housing, under questioning by Senator Tunnell of Delaware, Mr. Acheson asserted that what they had in mind was merely shelter — “temporary accommodations for people who are just out in the weather.”

Director General Lehman also strained backwards in reassuring the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations that it was not his intention or that of UNRRA to undertake long-range rehabilitation or reconstruction. Senator Vandenberg fixed this point unalterably: “Governor Lehman, it seems to be quite clear in the text of the agreement that there is a very clear purpose to draw a sharp line of distinction between relief and rehabilitation as such in this operation, and that you are intending to confine yourself, and UNRRA is intending to confine itself, exclusively to relief except insofar as contingent rehabilitation contributes to relief. Is that correct?”

Mr. Lehman: “That is correct. I believe there is an absolute prohibition adopted by the Council with regard to the undertaking of what might be described as permanent reconstruction activities. That was certainly the intention.”

Senator Tom Connally, then Chairman of the Committee, gave the *coup de grace* to any hopes that UNRRA would help devastated areas back to their economic feet. Addressing Director General Lehman, Chairman Connally summarized the understanding as follows: “Governor, I am much interested in your testimony about the extent to which this organization might go as between rehabilitation and reconstruction. *I hope very much you will adhere rigidly to that idea. It seems to me that the Congress and the country want to extend the temporary relief in these areas, but neither favors any large expenditure looking toward reconstruction in the broad sense.*” (Italics supplied)

These quotations are not given in criticism. They merely exemplify the mood of the country. The limitation imposed by the United States covered not only our contribution, which amounted ultimately to 2.7 billions, but also the resources of UNRRA contributed by other countries, totaling one billion dollars more.

The result of this policy appears in the total allocation of UNRRA resources to different categories of assistance. This shows that relief supplies consisting of food, clothing, footwear, medical and sanitation equipment, absorbed 63.5 per cent of the total expenditures. By and large, 36.5 per cent, or a little over one billion dollars, was allocated to agricultural and industrial rehabilitation incidental to relief.

What has been the effect of this program upon the

present and future prospects of recipient countries? The general impression of UNRRA workers returning to the United States from various missions is that countries such as Poland and Yugoslavia have made better use of the resources given to them than countries west of the Iron Curtain. The plight of Greece is too well known, in spite of 450 millions of help by UNRRA and other institutions, to require further elaboration here. And the same conditions are present in other countries, as attested by the fury of political and economic unrest. Premier de Gasperi has asked for additional aid from the United States, warning that “hunger is the chief threat to democracy in Italy. Only chaos from famine could bring either a Leftist or Rightist dictatorship” — both seem the same to him. And the UNRRA program in Austria was terminated, with the job of putting Austria on her feet left to some other organization.

The real trouble with UNRRA

The fact that UNRRA devoted a large proportion of its resources to the shipment of consumer goods is not in itself an indictment of poor planning. That was, after all, stipulated largely by Congress. But food and other subsistence supplies could have been used to bring about permanent rehabilitation, if properly handled. Subsistence of labor is the basic element from which capital is created. Supporting labor while at work on making or repairing capital goods, factories, and machinery could have resulted in substantial rehabilitation.

The real failure of the UNRRA program was not in the kind, but in the use, of relief supplies. Instead of using this temporary supply of subsistence goods for putting people to work in reconstruction jobs, it was essentially employed in meeting the deficits of an already inflated currency system of the recipient country. This point will be clear when we analyze the manner in which UNRRA goods were disposed of in each country.

According to resolutions of the UNRRA Council, UNRRA itself was mainly a procurement and supply agency; the actual distribution was assigned to the governments of the countries receiving aid. UNRRA therefore turned over supplies to local governments. These in turn *sold* the UNRRA supplies within their own countries for local currency, which was really printing-press money. Only a small proportion of UNRRA supplies was distributed free to extremely needy cases. Most of the supplies were sold in Italy for liras, in Greece for drachmas, in Austria for schillings, and so on.

Anticipating the fact that in this fashion UNRRA lost control over the disposition of these supplies, it

stipulated in its contracts with the recipient countries that the governments would set aside the revenues from the sale of UNRRA goods and would agree to the re-employment of those funds for internal rehabilitation. As Director General Lehman stated before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "The money will be used in carrying on further work of relief and rehabilitation within their country."

This program unfortunately did not work out as planned, for three reasons.

First, in some countries the "distribution costs" have been so large that they have eaten up most of the revenue from the sale of UNRRA supplies. These distribution costs are the cost of internal transportation, warehousing, wholesale and retail commissions, and so forth. With a large part of the revenue from the sale of UNRRA supplies used up in this fashion, there was not much left over to undertake local rehabilitation. In the case of Greece it is said the cost of internal distribution amounted to more than 80 per cent of the gross revenues received therefrom.

Second, the recipient governments were already operating under heavy and mounting deficits for nonproductive employment in the maintenance of the military establishments and the ordinary civilian functions. The UNRRA contribution was but a small proportion of the deficiency already present. Relief goods were consumed by the use of the inflated currency while people were on the public payroll for economically nonproductive work, and the receipts from their sale did not substantially diminish the budgetary deficits. The government recaptured some of its printing-press currency by selling UNRRA goods, but the "reserve" so created was no better than the paper it was printed on, and just as inflationary. UNRRA put the cart before the horse; it let people consume its supplies before putting them to work on reconstruction.

A third and equally strong reason for this result was that there were no adequate plans and organization *in time* to apply the subsistence aid given by UNRRA for the employment of labor in reconstruction. In order to use capital in the form of food, shelter, and other elements of subsistence, in the creation, through labor, of new productive equipment, you have to have the plans, the food, the labor, and necessary tools and raw materials all together in time and place. This is the way we built the transcontinental railroads through the wilderness.

The governments of some recipient countries like Italy and Austria now find that the UNRRA sup-

plies are used up and that they hold local currency reserves received from the sale of those supplies, without the underlying subsistence to support the population while engaged on reconstruction. The money reserves are just so much paper. In April, 1947, Austria ended up with a reserve of 714 million schillings in its "reconstruction fund" obtained from UNRRA goods, equal to one fourth of the annual budget. The value of this fund, after the UNRRA goods are consumed, is no more than printed money. The same situation exists in Italy.

We see that the combination of the two basic policy decisions, confining UNRRA assistance to relief only, which meant consumer goods principally, and secondly, failing to synchronize the availability of UNRRA supplies within the country with reconstruction plans of the government, has resulted in the consumption of UNRRA aid without substantial permanent rehabilitation of the economies of these countries. We come to the end of UNRRA aid, after having spent 3.7 billions, with the basic economic difficulties of devastated countries still unsolved, and revolutionary tendencies stirred by hunger and destitution still rampant.

It should be no surprise, therefore, to find the Secretary General of the United Nations reporting, under a resolution of the Economic and Social Council (February, 1947), that in the year 1947 alone, a group of European countries still need *net* relief from abroad of 2.5 billions. This can become a continuing dole unless more strenuous and successful efforts at reconstruction are undertaken.

Take the cash

UNRRA was the most active of our post-war aid programs, and the failure of its basic philosophy is one of the decisive fumbles of international economic policy. Now let us briefly look at the rest of the economic Pandora's box that has left Congress gasping for direction. The Monetary Fund is still dormant with slight stirrings of life; only 25 millions have been advanced to France and 12 millions to the Netherlands.

The International Bank, too, is slow and late in getting started. It had to wait upon the approval of the British loan. It had to go through soul-searchings in personnel matters. It still has to carve its particular niche in the conscience of the American investment bankers, savings institutions, and insurance companies. And of all the forty-four countries subscribing to its huge capital, only the United States has authorized the bank to lend its current subscription, which restricts its present operation to some 635 millions plus 90 millions in gold and dollars originally subscribed by all other countries,

making a total of 725 millions. Of that, 250 millions were allocated to France early in May, 1947. At the very least it will be well into 1948 before substantial progress is made on large-scale reconstruction loans. Even then, present indications are that its contributions will be insufficient to meet the needs of the times.

The 1947 relief appropriation of 350 millions, the Philippine credit of 75 millions, and the International Refugee Organization's allotment of 75 millions are too small to make an appreciable difference in the gloomy future of liberated areas. And the 725 millions of Army relief in Korea, Japan, Germany, and Austria will hardly lift the caloric allowance of their people above starvation levels.

It is manifest from the current facts that although plans were large and the architectural design was fashioned on a grand scale, performance in the reconstruction of war-torn countries has been both dilatory and deficient. We have missed the historical pulse-beat. What was a logical time sequence of events — Relief (UNRRA), Reconstruction (International Bank), Stability (Monetary Fund) — appears in the glaring aftermath as the product of ivory-tower thinking. The enormity of the destruction, the exhaustion of human initiative in devastated areas, the complete disorganization of Europe's and Asia's productive institutions, were not adequately foreseen in the plans of the hopeful year 1945. The press reports that this is now admitted by "spokesmen" of our State Department, who are working on a new and bigger plan.

Of all the instruments created since the end of the war, the two that have been used with alacrity and decision are the direct and sole responsibility of the American government — the Export-Import Bank and the British loan. The Export-Import Bank, out of its total resources of 3.5 billions, had committed by December 31, 1946, 2.6 billions and earmarked 500 millions for China. Europe alone secured almost 2 billions, of which only one-half was disbursed by December 31, 1946, and much of the balance authorized but not yet used. France, with a total credit authorization of 1.2 billions, was the principal beneficiary, followed by the Netherlands — 280 millions, Belgium — 100 millions, Finland — 75 millions, Norway — 50 millions, Poland — 46 millions.

These are all intergovernmental loans. In spite of protestations before Congressional committees by Leo T. Crowley and William McChesney Martin, Jr., successive chairmen of the Board of the Export-Import Bank, that this institution, as distinct from all others, was going to concentrate on encouraging private trade, it too has become an aid in the state

trading proclivities of Europe, inevitably so in view of the gravity of reconstruction problems which only state authority seems able to meet.

And even in this field, the bank is at the end of its resources. It has used up most of its funds in authorized loans and commitments extending over many years. In its December 31, 1946, report, released last March, it stated with grim finality: "The Export-Import Bank has decided that it must bring to an end its program of emergency reconstruction credits."

This door, too, is now nearly closed. What effect the bank's credits have had upon reconstruction is hard to assess at this time. It is safe to say that technologically advanced countries such as Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and Norway are making the most of the credits in rehabilitation of transport and public utility services. The proposed Export-Import loans to Greece (25 millions) and Italy (100 millions) are frozen, for an obvious reason — political instability; and the 500 millions promised to China have been allowed to lapse.

And here is the paradox: those countries whose democratic traditions have survived the cataclysm of World War II, and whose institutions exhibit the sinews of survival, can secure loans, and make good use of them. The loans may be insufficient but they are applied effectively to reconstruction. Those other nations where the political institutions are shaky, the internal administrative machinery is weak, and the political tension from the Left is most threatening are the ones which can least qualify for assistance under existing programs of international economic aid. In the very testing ground of non-Communist institutions, the strict bankers' approach to intergovernmental loans, requiring stability, safety, and a good chance of repayment, leaves the prospective victims of revolution and civil war without aid and recourse.

The essentially passive character of the creditor, sitting on this side of the Atlantic and surveying with glassy-eyed skepticism the shenanigans of Communists in those countries, is not designed to relieve the economic pressures under which the democratic forces are struggling for survival. This is no way to stop revolution nurtured in poverty. This is no way to outmaneuver the forces of political and economic disintegration. It is plain that we missed the cue in not providing, beyond relief, for a machinery of regeneration of economic enterprise in the most blighted areas of the world.

Priming the British pump

One of the basic steps in our international pirouette with Communism has been our partnership

with the British Empire. Whether we selected the right partner, or with what luck in future bliss, only time will tell. It is a cardinal tenet of Winston Churchill's companionate marriage which we have accepted (he called it "fraternal association") that we should concern ourselves with the economic well-being of our gallant, proud, but poor companion, obviously in international distress. "We must support the British Empire even after the war" was a common doctrine of faith in the Lend-Lease Administration during the war, and accounted in part for the generous treatment she received while war lasted. With the abrupt termination of Lend-Lease in September, 1945, by President Truman, our wartime partner was in a sad condition indeed.

Lord Keynes and his colleagues came here to "negotiate" a 5-billion peacetime lend-lease and went home with a 3.75-billion loan. Under Secretary William Clayton assured Senators that England would not draw more than one or one and a quarter billions a year. On that basis this credit would see England through the critical three years, until 1950.

In May, 1947, less than a year after Congressional approval, one half of the loan had been drawn, and both in England and here it was confidently predicted that the total sum advanced by the United States will be used up before the end of 1948, without having achieved British self-sufficiency, and in all probability before any appreciable normalization of world trade. Here again, another mainstay of our post-war economic structure proves to be inadequate.

Having made available 23 billions in two years, without substantial improvement abroad, what guarantee is there, in the proposed "peacetime lend-lease" of 5 billions a year, or 25 billions in five years, that it will regenerate the waning ambitions and institutions of three quarters of the world's population? Bevin and Bidault, at the helm of foreign affairs in England and France, show an understandable haste in "organizing" to qualify for additional help under Secretary Marshall's "We will help those who help themselves" program. But there is yet to be invented an international financial program whereby it is possible to obtain net assets by summing up a lot of deficits. One is justly inclined to give Senator Vandenberg credit for penetrating insight when he proposed a "highest level" committee to make an audit of our own assets and international needs.

The cost of confusion

What is the answer to this dilemma? Shall we stay home, conserve our resources and finances, and

prepare for the worst? This would mean Communism on the North Sea, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean. It may mean Communism in all China and, in time, in India. In our own country, a self-contained economy would be a regimented economy, and, with the likelihood of economic reverses at home, it may even mean the end of free enterprise. It certainly would not foreclose the possibility of World War III, bred in the greed of dictators, or the envy of the poor, or the fear of the strong. And such a war may have to be fought over Boston, New York, and Washington.

Should we go to the other extreme and pour out our substance in "loans," "grants," or an outright lend-lease program? Up to 10 per cent of our productive effort, to rehabilitate the world, means, of course, not money alone but diminishing reserves of iron ore and oil, the skills of our technicians, and the labor of our people, with no selfish motive of repayment, hoping that we shall stem the tide of Communism through the generosity of capitalist America.

Even if this were politically feasible, there is the more serious consideration to take into account. Is it a provident policy to exhaust the natural resources of our land, and to give without stint not only of our substance but also of our knowledge, without the certainty that we shall thereby achieve either economic freedom for all countries of the world outside the Soviet sphere, or the establishment of "democratic" or, at the very least, "friendly" governments? The chances of failure in both our economic and political aspirations are very real, and we may end up weakening ourselves financially and in natural resources, while the countries benefiting from our largesse may still fall under the spell of a crafty and competing system of world power, carrying into the camp of our potential enemy both the capital and the know-how generously contributed. Here our sad experience with Japan comes quickly to mind.

A charter for survival

What, then, are the available instruments of economic policy which avert the mistakes of economic isolation or prodigal internationalism?

The record shows that the aid program as fashioned during 1944-1945 was insufficient in scale, restricted in its application, old-fashioned and ineffective in the passive bankers' approach to reconstruction. We did not realize in time that if the world's political stability and mankind's hopes of peace were our responsibility, then certainly economic rehabilitation and reconstruction were equally our task, not only in *giving* but even more in *doing*.

Let us not quibble about the errors of the past, but use them as guidance for the future. The torrent of history — and we hear its roar from China, Germany, France, Italy, and many other lands — does not wait for the self-indulgence of democracies in investigations, debates, and elections.

The hour requires the boldest use of the best in our tested instruments of successful economic action. We must lift the curtain of antiquity in our international economic program. We must rend the anachronisms of precedents. Mere lip service to democracy and diplomatic double-talk, while we dawdle with intergovernmental “loans” to questionable quislings or quasi-dictators abroad, are not worthy of the spirit of the people who embraced a continent and forged an empire within a century.

What are those instruments which helped us scale the mountains, plow the prairies, hew the forests in a thousand arteries of commerce? First and foremost, the priceless and unique gift, which the Founders had the courage to call a right, of freedom of the individual. Let us require this as the price of our friendship and help — not an onerous condition — and the people of the whole world will be our friends. A bill of rights with every peace treaty, a bill of rights with every dollar, is not a burdensome interest to exact. If this be interference with the internal affairs of other countries, let Russia make the most of it.

A second and equally powerful instrument we have used in this country's rapid progress is the collective application of capital, through the corporate form of enterprise, to the accomplishment of great economic objectives. From the earliest days of this country's independence, the corporation has been the principal vehicle of economic progress. It made possible aggregations of capital for a common purpose, were it the construction of a railroad across the continent or the conversion of coal into sheer stockings. A corporate charter is the extension of a sovereign state's authority to a company of private individuals to achieve a purpose defined and approved by the state. It gives both power and responsibility. In combination with capital resources, this makes for quick and effective action.

Corporations are not necessarily organized for private profit. There are corporations created for public purposes, equally effective in satisfying local or national needs. The Tennessee Valley Authority is a public corporation, created for specific tasks, just as truly as United States Steel is a private corporation, and one might say the former is as successful in achieving the functions assigned to it as the latter.

It seems to be true in the international field, as it is in domestic activity, that the corporate form of organization in public as well as private business is the most effective of all institutional forms available for action. Governmental boards, departments, bureaus, commissions, and what not suffer from the common bureaucratic debilities of ill-defined functions, multi-headed direction, checks and balances, which result in diffusion of responsibility, lack of authority, and inaction.

In World War II, two of the most effective international organizations used by this country were the Metal Reserve Company and the United States Commercial Company, little known but highly effective subsidiaries of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Although the Board of Economic Warfare made much noise, these two companies had the money, and the men with authority to spend it. And they secured for this country's war program the strategic materials needed — diamonds from South Africa or Brazil, tungsten from China, mica from India, chrome from Turkey, and scores of other products. There was no debility in these organizations which a few personnel changes could not have corrected. Whereas the BEW could cajole, persuade, threaten, or blow up, as it did, on the Washington scene, the subsidiaries of the RFC could buy, build, loan, own, sell, and transport what was needed, and they did. They were, in their way, just as effective, in principle, as Standard Oil of New Jersey or the International Telephone and Telegraph Company.

We should, then, channelize our foreign economic aid through Federally created corporations, with the power to *do* things in the countries that are most in need. If a telephone system has to be rebuilt, or a powerhouse reconditioned, if a fish-canning industry has to be established, such a corporation could go ahead and do these things.

Finally, under the corporate form of organization, we could make available our technological know-how directly, immediately, and effectively. Instead of merely “advising” some foreign governmental bureau, or being hired by a less qualified foreign politician at a fee — both conditions unsatisfactory to most United States technicians of high competence and reputation — an American corporation, with money and authority and power to act, under competent American business leadership, could command the highest type of American technicians, who would be more likely to overcome their natural disinclination to leave the comforts of life in these United States. This would have the added advantage that over a number of years the United States would develop a large, competent

personnel familiar with foreign lands, their habits and languages, and their installations — a not inconsiderable advantage in these troubled times.

We should, therefore, now begin to think in terms of Federal incorporation of an International Reconstruction Corporation with the power to build, own, buy, sell, lend, borrow. Give it total capital stock authorization of, say, 10 billions, to be subscribed to by the United States Treasury, with specifically authorized subsidiaries capitalized as follows: —

Italian Reconstruction Corporation	\$1,000,000,000
Greek Reconstruction Corporation	250,000,000
German Reconstruction Corporation	2,000,000,000
Austrian Reconstruction Corporation	250,000,000
Korean Reconstruction Corporation	500,000,000
Chinese Reconstruction Corporation	2,000,000,000
Near Eastern Development Company	1,000,000,000
Indian Development Company	1,000,000,000
Western European Reconstruction Company (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway)	2,000,000,000
TOTAL	\$10,000,000,000

Each of these companies could be given the power to borrow in an amount equal to but not exceeding its subscribed and paid-in capital. They must be able to borrow not only in the countries in which they are active — to hire local labor, for instance — but also from the Export-Import Bank and the International Bank, as well as private banks in the United States. Let them engage men of the highest competence and achievement, with salaries ranging up to \$25,000 a year, and give them the resources and the authority to undertake the reconstruction and development tasks with traditional American drive and efficiency.¹

Actions speak louder

There are three possible arguments against this suggestion. First, it will be said that this proposal is American neo-imperialism, and even worse than the imperialism of private corporations, for it will have the sanction, power, and resources of the United States government. Although appearances lend credibility to this argument, it must be remembered that what makes imperialism obnoxious is the profiteering by foreign corporations, and the imposition of low economic standards, through subsidized puppet governments, which exhibit the worst elements of political and economic exploitation. One

¹ Great Britain is purposely excluded from this scheme. Its political and economic situation would not adapt to United States initiative as envisaged in this suggestion. The plight of Britain and its Empire requires a separate evaluation.

need only recall the conditions in the Bolivian tin mines, the East Indian oil fields, or the Malayan rubber plantations, for examples of this kind of exploitation.

What is proposed here is something entirely different. It would be an undertaking for the people, without any profit, securing only enough return over cost of operations to pay perhaps a 2 per cent interest on the money supplied — the average cost of money to the United States government. If there should be a profit over a fair (I hope a rising) standard of wages, the corporate charter may provide that such profit be expended in social services — such as health and sanitary measures, educational programs, public construction, and restoration projects. Lest there be still some doubt of the ultimate purpose of such direct action, the charter may also stipulate that after five years the corporation will transfer its assets to an accredited agency of the local government for a fair price, not to exceed cost.

A second argument will be that foreign governments will not accept aid under these conditions; that they will not permit such an American organization to function freely. This is likely to be true of the Western democracies with a heightened sense of sovereignty and dignity, such as France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Where possible, this reserve may be overcome through participation in capital stock and in the Board of Directors. I would even provide for United Nations representation on the Board; but the direction must remain American and unhampered until the final objective of reconstruction is achieved. Other countries like Greece, Italy, Austria, Germany, China, and Korea are in no condition to haggle over the terms of our aid. And they are the very countries most in need of help and least qualified to receive loans from the established financial institutions. The proposed instrumentality is ideally suited for direct aid to those destitute countries.

Finally, it may be said that such an American institution would be in no better position to ensure repayment — to convert foreign assets and income into dollars — than intergovernmental loans. Whether or not this will be true depends upon the effectiveness and success of the proposed organization. With the right to build, own, borrow, lend, buy, and sell, such a corporation would be in position to select its objectives with a view to increasing productivity of local labor and to encouraging of export industries.

For instance, Italy secured a 25-million dollar cotton export loan from the Export-Import Bank. But when the cotton got to Italian mills, finished

goods were slow in coming to market. The manufacturers were hoarding in anticipation of higher prices. With most of the world hungry for cotton goods, and Italy desperately needing sterling and dollar balances, this was clearly a strike against the Italian people. But let an American corporation take the cotton to Italy and lend it to the manufacturer direct, with a contract for delivery of the finished products on a time schedule; then there would be productive employment and an exportable product much in demand in food-producing North Africa, Egypt, or the Belgian Congo. Under this scheme, at least Italy's problem — the importation of food from abroad — would be partially solved and somewhat more successfully than at present, and not always at United States taxpayers' expense.

The second step, the repayment of interest and principal to the United States, may be postponed for some time, and ultimately will depend upon our willingness to buy more goods abroad. Our total commitments abroad will be smaller, with less drain on our resources, and the problem of repayment more manageable. We are now sending food, coal, fertilizer, seed — nearly everything that is needed to sustain life in Europe at a miserable level. The Ruhr coal mines, however, are operating at half of pre-war output, and transportation, industry, and agriculture suffer permanent decline for lack of fuel. The reason for the Ruhr coal debacle is lack of organization, undernourished labor, missing equipment. England and Scandinavian countries have a fish catch greater than their needs, but do not know what to do with it. There is no "exchange" in the Ruhr, of course, to buy this for the coal miners, who need it.

There is no organization that can borrow from the Export-Import Bank or the International Bank; there is no organization that can bring together United States equipment and grains, British fish, German labor, and the black gold in the earth that all Europe needs. J. J. McCloy, President of the International Bank, suggests an "authority" for Ruhr coal so that he can lend it money; and Harold Stassen suggests immediate revival of Ruhr coal, two years too late, but that is not Mr. Stassen's fault. Here is a situation where the proposed German Reconstruction Corporation, under American initiative, would get results quicker than any other system of boards or commissions, and thereby speed European reconstruction and diminish the current drain upon the United States and Britain.

Direct action in multilateral trade by our own corporations would increase the chances of repayment in goods and services in other ways. Take the case of tourist trade. Now we discourage tourism in Europe because of lack of accommodations and shortage of food. If such an American corporation were operating in Italy, it could very well use some of its local currency receipts in the regeneration of tourist trade, even to the extent of constructing the necessary hotel accommodations, for ultimately tourists will contribute a great deal more to the Italian dollar balances than they will use in food and fuel. The same result may obtain on a triangular exchange of goods. If we send cotton and machinery to Italy, and she sends textiles to North Africa or the Congo, then she may receive food and timber in exchange, and we may receive much-needed minerals, such as copper and pitchblende, and even iron ore.

The United States will need scrap iron for future use to replenish our dwindling iron ore supplies. It does not pay for a private company to collect the scrap from the European battlefields, pay the shipping costs, and sell it at United States prices. As a result, scrap lies on the fields of Western Europe (I suspect this is not the case east of the Iron Curtain), while there is unemployment in Italy and Germany and we are called upon to feed them. A governmental corporation could well arrange for the collection and shipment of this scrap to the United States, giving employment there, an excellent stockpile here, and a relief cost which would be only the deficit, if any, in this operation, instead of the full cost of supporting unemployed people.

This, of course, is state trading, and violates our most cherished illusions that the post-war world would be a heaven for the private trader. We must, however, appraise our alternatives. Our choice abroad at the present juncture is not between private trade and a state trading system. Our choice is state trading by inefficient foreign entities with our own capital, without chance of repayment, and a good possibility that it will be dominated by a competing, if not unfriendly, governmental system; or, an effective American development and trading corporation which will do the job of reconstruction efficiently, return a good part of our investment, with a fair chance that we shall regenerate a friendly people and a friendly government. This, then, can be the American ideological counteroffensive with the weapons we best know how to use.

This is the third article on American aid to Europe to appear in recent issues of the *Atlantic*. The fourth, "American Technology for Starved Lands," by R. P. Russell, President of the Standard Oil Development Company, will appear in the September issue. — THE EDITOR

ARE AMERICANS POLYGAMOUS?

by DAVID L. COHN

1

OUR divorce rate has increased 600 per cent since the Civil War. Its trend is still upward. Two marriages in five now end in divorce. (No one knows how many persons, unable to afford the luxury of divorce, simply "take up" with another mate.) Ten years hence, it is estimated, one marriage in two will conclude in the courts. Who says Americans are monogamous?

Business certainly could not endure as a stable system if two out of five business contracts reached the courts. What must be the effect upon marriage as the contracting parties enter upon it in a nation where so large a part of the contracts are broken? To what degree does the instability of American marriage breed instability?

The casualties of American marriage are higher than those of our wars, and more damaging to the country. You see the scars in the truncated spirit, the embittered heart, and the cynical mind. You see the wounds in the bewildered children of the divorced — displaced persons from the American home. Who shall calculate their pain and ingrowing misery?

The casualties of American marriage indicate our most unhappy national failure. For if a man fails in the central relationship of his life, if his family is shattered and the family security of his children is destroyed, his home is obviously worthless.

This is not to decry the uses of divorce. It is to say that however "right" divorce may be in a given case, it nonetheless marks a grave breakdown in man's most important relationship. And since divorce is an omnipresent fact in our national life, with its rate constantly increasing, American marriage, on the evidence, is a monumental failure. How did this come to be?

It takes a Southerner to press a question as touchy as this. DAVID L. COHN is a Mississippian who studied at the University of Virginia and at Yale, and whose books on the Negro (*God Shakes Creation*), on American industry (*The Good Old Days*), and on matrimony (*Love in America*) mark him as a very versatile bachelor indeed.

Forty years ago, a woman who indulged in extra-marital relations not only gravely endangered her marriage, but the penalty of discovery was often banishment from the society of so-called "nice" people. Forty years ago, a girl who indulged in pre-marital relations, gravely endangered her chances of marriage. Today, as we know, effective prohibitions are no longer in force. The married woman who has a love affair may be the subject of gossip but, unless she uses a gun, is not an outcast within her own group. The premarital relations of girls, which have been stimulated by the war, are so common that young men, by their own testimony, no longer expect to marry a virgin. Thousands of girls' letters ask the same question of columnists for the lovelorn: "How can I be 'popular' and virginal?" There is no doubt that the change in our sexual morals over these forty years has had a direct effect upon our divorce rate.

I am not arguing that we are necessarily "worse" than our ancestors; I am simply looking certain facts in the face. Consider the car which enables couples to escape the eyes of the community; consider also the widespread knowledge of contraception which enables them to escape the biological consequences of their sexual acts. Who shall say how our elders might have behaved in the 1890's if these factors had then been present?

With our departure from the old sexual standards and with promiscuity made inviting by both world wars, one can mark the growing irresponsibility toward marriage. Marriage has been made almost meaningless by many who marry with the reservation that if they do not like the marriage, they will quickly get out of it. Whenever the parties enter into the marriage contract with an escape clause in their minds, it is a marriage of the market place, as when one buys a stove upon thirty days' trial. Yet such marriages, which in many cases are merely the expression of an unconscious desire to have the law bless a fleeting experimental mood,

are performed every day, and this with the general approbation of the community, for they could neither exist without that approbation nor be conceived in an atmosphere hostile to them.

No people can take marriage seriously who take divorce lightly, even jocularly. Picture magazines display pages of photographs of divorce court scenes as casually as though they were fashion shows. Gossip columns, read by the millions, gleefully speculate upon prospective divorces among the well-known. Metropolitan newspapers carry announcements of the multiple marriages and divorces of the fashionable, for Names Make News. These facts are significant in any appraisal of our manners, since in our allegedly classless society the masses tend to ape the classes.

This is the land where we mouth noble words about marriage, and set up profitable red-light districts of divorce. These districts are Nevada, Arkansas, Florida, California, Wyoming — and others are eager to enter the trade. This is the country, and these are the states, where the marriage contract, alone among contracts, may be broken at will — even though, nine times out of ten, the breaking is a travesty of the law because it is an act of collusion between the parties.

In these districts no questions are asked. The test is simply that of a house of prostitution: ability and willingness to pay for the services demanded. Residence is established by hanging up your hat, and a hat for the hanging may be rented. Divorce is granted for good reason or no reason. The complainant's whim is the state's will. Divorce is big business. Competition is keen, and while the state, in its organized harlotry, does not send its girls to meet the train, the traveler is sure of a hearty welcome by the Madame masquerading as a judge in what — God help us — is known as a court of justice. Competitive pressure has reduced the required period of legal residence in Nevada from six months to six weeks.

Business magazines report divorce business as they report sales of sewer pipe. *Business Week* (July 14, 1945) says: —

Estimates of what the divorce business means to Reno run from \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000 a year. It costs . . . \$500 to \$600 to get a divorce in Reno. . . . Counsel fees vary widely. The basic fee is said to be \$100 in Las Vegas, \$150 in Reno. From there it ranges up to about \$5,000 for the average wealthy client, a great deal more for the fabulously rich (Gloria Vanderbilt is said to have paid \$25,000 for her freedom; Barbara Hutton \$50,000).

Nevada, with 0.1 per cent of our population, grants more than 2 per cent of our divorces. But

the greatest increase in the divorce traffic was recorded in 1945 in Los Angeles County, California, where 17,083 decrees were entered. This is almost double the Nevada trade, and three times the divorce sales of a rising competitor — Miami, Florida.

We have, then, the revolting spectacle of several states scrambling for divorce business as they do for the tourist trade. Man's most significant personal relationship is sundered in an atmosphere of chicanery and buffoonery.

2

WHY do our marriages fail so widely? The reasons are many and complex, but only a few can be touched upon here.

It may be that in this era of revaluation of values, we are slowly abandoning our ancient concepts of marriage and the family as we move toward new forms whose shapes are still inchoate. Man's relation to God, the state, the family, and marriage have all come under increasingly sharp scrutiny and have been subjected to various degrees of change since the French Revolution. Two hundred years ago there began the gradual dechristianization of the West, in the sense that man, not God, was enthroned at the center of the universe. The consequences are necessarily profound and all-pervasive. But mankind does not trust itself. The period since 1914 has been marked by wars, revolutions, crashings of empires, risings of dictators, and destruction unparalleled in history. Men yearn for a security which does not exist. They seek a faith which they do not find in their religions. Their moorings have been swept away. They scarcely know what to believe or where to turn.

Monogamous marriage, as we have known it, is challenged. For if repetitive divorces are permitted for capricious reasons — as in the notorious Tommy Manville case — we are tacitly establishing a legal halfway house between monogamy and polygamy. It is a polygamous relation accessible now only to the well-to-do. The ordinary man can no more afford the luxury of repetitive divorces than the ordinary Moslem, to whom polygamy is permitted by his faith, can afford four wives. But this is unimportant. What is important is that the law permits men to skip into and out of marriage at will, and the law is the expression of the will of the people. If we abandon monogamous marriage, it follows that we must also abandon our old concepts of the family and the relationship of parents to children.

It is too early to say precisely in what direction we are heading, but it is evident from the statistics

of divorce that we are not heading in the direction of re-establishing monogamous marriage and the family in their once almost impregnable position. Marriage, as we know it, is an institution of relatively recent origin. Monogamous marriage is largely a product of the Western world. Cultures as great as ours, or greater, have long endured under other forms of marriage. And it may be that Americans, subconsciously believing that marriage and the family, as they have anciently existed, no longer suit their needs, are slowly changing them for other forms.

If we seek, however, specific reasons for our high divorce rate, we shall find them expressed in our attitudes and aspirations, in our character, in the manner in which we think and act. It is apparent, for example, that divorce lightly asked and lightly granted is individualism gone mad. It is an orgy of the ego. An anarchy within the law. It is an indulgence of the gratification of the immediate desires of man or wife without regard to family, children, or state. It is the case of *my* welfare and the rest be damned. Commenting upon our individualistic anarchy in another context, Frank W. Notestein wrote as follows in the *Atlantic* (June, 1946):—

The true causes of the declining birth rate lie [very deep]. They are to be found in the gradual shift from a society organized around the family and its perpetuation to one oriented toward the individual, his physical and material welfare, and opportunity for his advancement.

3

It is characteristic that, although the landscape of America is cluttered with the wreckage of marriage, we continue to foster a falsely romantic point of view toward it. Marriage is a difficult, if deeply rewarding, exercise in human relations. Perhaps it is even, as William Graham Sumner put it, "a state of antagonistic coöperation." Yet it is represented to the young by their elders, the movies, and slick magazine fiction, as a perpetual Christmas Eve with Tiny Tim passing double Martinis and saying "God bless you, every one." The deception is cruel and stupid. It is cruel because it is bound to bring about a mood of revulsion and disappointment in the mind of the deceived. It is stupid because it is no more a preparation for marriage than tree-sitting is a preparation for the ballet. And it is the expression of the dangerous mawkish romanticism of a people who refuse to subscribe to the first principle of becoming adult: to recognize that every blessing has its price.

We teach our young that to be married is auto-

matically to be happy. We believe that everybody is, ought to be, or can be made happy; that all are "entitled" to happiness as to fresh air. One must be happy all the time; slap-happy if possible. But simultaneously, in our anarchy of impermanence, we believe that if we are not happy in one marriage we shall surely be happy in another. This is the miracle wrought by a change of address and laundry marks. Few people pursue happiness with such demoniac energy as we, briefly pausing at one roadside stand of illusion before rushing to another.

We reject the austere truths that human life is tragic and its destiny dark; that frustration and pain are of the world as well as fruition and joy. So, too, in our passion for black and white, we reject the exquisite nuances that lie in what might be called informed patience—that profound patience and stillness of the spirit which tutors and restrains the impulsive mind as instinct restrains or impels the jungle-watching tiger.

Happiness in marriage eludes those who make a dogma of it, and so they become foes to compromise. Marriage is, among other things, the art of the possible. Love is not "pure," but exists in combination with other things. It is interwoven with heredity, family or class tradition, religion, prejudices, predilections, and an infinite number of other qualities in an infinite number of variations. It is certainly not a machine which gives the same response whenever a button is pushed.

The attitudes among us that destroy marriage are the result of our emotional and intellectual adolescence as a people. This, in my opinion, is the chief factor in our appalling divorce rate. The United States is the only country where the husband often is not—and does not want to be—a man, but a Boy. He wants, poor thing, not to be wived but to be mothered. Perhaps that is why he so often calls Maizie Mama, while Iwilla, his daughter, becomes Sister, and Joe, his son, becomes Brother. But Maizie dreamed of marrying a Man. Nobody told her that our men like to be giants in their offices and midgets in their homes. Yet all goes along well enough in the first years of marriage because Maizie finds it pleasant to mother her young boyish husband. But when the children come, she can far more satisfactorily discharge her maternal impulses through them. Then she begins to find it tiresome to baby her husband. She yearns to live with a Man, and since neither entered the marriage with mature attitudes toward it, while its contents made maturing impossible, Maizie soon is on her way to Reno. There she gets a divorce, and this time marries a man who wears knitted ties unlike the foulards affected by her first husband.

So, too, out of our immaturity, we have come to look upon marriage either as a relationship at will, or as a finality. In the first case we do not take it seriously. In the second case we see it murkily. Marriage is obviously not a finality but a beginning, since if it is to thrive, it must be constantly renewed. Marrying is a different thing from marriage, for the one implies something completed, while implicit in the other is the concept of becoming rather than being. Girls are brought up to look forward to marrying; then they may relax. Men marry to "settle down." But both may discover too late that a spiritual ferment, a search for a perfection never to be found, is the condition precedent to spiritual repose. We find such a concept tedious and emotionally tiring. It suggests the task never completed, the problem never solved. We want to do something and be done with it. We want today's car delivered yesterday. Life is a short story, not an epic; and before you begin to

read it, the editor tells you precisely how many minutes it will take for the reading.

Yet the fact that there are no finalities in marriage, nor even in divorce, makes little difference to us in our search for marital happiness. We continue to get divorced, change wives, breed various sets of children, and applaud when the speaker of the day comes to his thundering peroration — "And this, ladies and gentlemen, we must do not only for our own sake but for the sake of our children's children." Nor does it matter that while we prepare diligently to become a lawyer, plumber, secretary, our philosophical preparation for marriage is at best sketchy and at worst hopelessly inadequate. God will lead the way for the innocents, it is presumed, or the divorce courts will. It is only in heaven that you can eat your cake and have it too. Marriage, for all the rich satisfactions it may yield, is less than a heavenly estate, and one must conduct oneself according to its ordinances.



RELIGION AND CIVILIZATION

by NORMAN THOMAS

I

UNQUESTIONABLY a return to religion is one of the significant phenomena of our confused and troubled times. It is a phenomenon of many and contradictory aspects but it is definitely characterized by an awareness of, or search after, God.

By no means has this return to religion produced or revived what Arnold Toynbee would call a universal church. It has not even reached such popular dimensions as the Great Revival in the early nineteenth century, with its widespread influence on American life and thinking. It is not — again to use the language of Toynbee — a creation of the "internal proletariat." On the contrary, there is no evidence, at least in the United States, of great popular gains by organized religious bodies. The authoritative study of the Twentieth Century

Fund shows that by proper statistical standards the American churches, Roman Catholic as well as Protestant, are barely holding their own in terms of membership and active support.

At present the return to religion is an intellectual phenomenon. It is evidenced by such facts as the quality of certain recent converts to Roman Catholicism and the growing popularity of such different writers with such divergent views of religion as Toynbee, du Noüy, Kafka, and C. S. Lewis, and by the "discovery" of that religious existentialist, Kierkegaard, dead almost a hundred years.

It is easy to see in this return to religion a reaction from the failure of man to solve his problems by his own reason. In war, especially in the discovery and release of the atom bomb, the science which was the hope of the turn of the century has revealed its potentialities for the destruction of the race. Frankenstein's monster has become a myth grimly appropriate to our times.

It is worth comment that the immediate reaction

Author and publicist, NORMAN THOMAS is a man whose beliefs have remained unshaken through the years. In a summer as crucial as this, it is well to be reminded of man's spiritual aspiration and his ceaseless quest for peace.

to the First World War, in so far as it had a religious quality, was of a very different order. It expressed itself in humanism, which was given a certain quality of religious intensity. It organized, or tried to organize, community churches without theology. In my own experience it was common to find young Protestant clergymen and Jewish rabbis who were rather apologetic about any sort of faith in God. The creeds and rituals of the churches were socially useful myths. I remember an Episcopalian clergyman who, after he had said a conventional grace in a hotel, turned to me and remarked: "Of course when I pray to God I am really thinking of Lenin and Trotsky and all the workers of the world." That clergyman was Bishop Brown, later expelled from the Episcopal Church as a heretic. He wholeheartedly transferred his religious zeal to Communism. His was an extreme case but not so atypical as many believed. Indeed, in those days Communist opposition to organized religion was the stronger because in a very real sense Communism was itself a religion. If the Marxist materialist dialectic was an inversion of Hegel's idealist dialectic, so was the Leninist pattern of revolution an inversion of a Christian plan of salvation for mankind, with the working class as Messiah and the revolution a kind of secular apocalypse. After its violence would come an earthly millennium.

Communism has gained enormously in organizational strength since its earlier days and there is still a religious rather than a scientific quality to its creed. But already, like churches which have gone before it, it has lost much of its flaming quality of religious devotion.

There is a tendency in some quarters to hail this modern return to God as guaranteeing our social salvation from hate and hunger and war. It is an optimistic belief concerning which I should like to raise certain questions.

2

TO BEGIN with, by no means all of the present interest in a religious interpretation of life is vitally concerned with the salvation of society, much less with the Christian doctrine of God. Much of the current religious interest is frankly escapist. It is little concerned with social ethics. Some writers who are not escapists offer no particular social guidance or power to achieve any good society.

Let us consider two recent and very dissimilar writers, du Noüy and Kafka.

Du Noüy makes an impressive case, through his examination of the long evolutionary process, for a

God who is Mind and Purpose. He is anxious about ethics. But his argument does not establish the existence of the Christian God, who is Love. If Love is all-wise and all-powerful, it is difficult to understand the waste and cruelties of the evolutionary process. It is more difficult to accept the justice of a God who exacts from man, his creature, so slowly and painfully developed, a standard of conduct as absolute and lofty as that implicit in the Judeo-Christian ethic.

To the degree that Kafka, many years after his untimely death, may be a leader in a modern search after God, the being he discovered can by no means be described in terms of love. There is no hope for a solution of our human problems in Kafka's doctrine of what *Time* calls the "incompatibility of God and Man." Nor will a human society be preserved by a realization "that man's fate is also divine comedy." Kafka's biographer, Max Brod, illustrates what Thomas Mann calls "a very deep-rooted and involved humor" by telling us that when Kafka read to friends the opening chapters of *The Trial* (the story of a man crucified by inches), they laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks and Kafka himself laughed so hard that he could not go on reading. If *The Trial* is a twentieth-century Book of Job, there is about its God a complete lack of the magnificence of the Creator of heaven and earth whose justice, but not his greatness, Job in his suffering was led to question.

The God whom Kafka reveals or suggests in both *The Castle* and *The Trial* might be the inspiration for the dictator of a totalitarian state but never for a fellowship of free men. Have we not been told something of the sort again and again by fascists and Communists concerning the justice and the grace of a Hitler or a Stalin? It would be far nobler for men to curse God and die rather than to seek for themselves any inspiration from One who deserves "eternal misunderstanding" — or worse — by the incomprehensibility of his ways towards men.

It is, however, scarcely fair to judge religion and its social effects in terms of an acceptance of the extraordinary loneliness of man created by a Cosmic Jester to live in an alien world. Rather, it is the function in general of the modern return to religion to provide men with consolation. A given religion may not assure our civilization, or humanity itself, of salvation in the world, but rather of redemption for its believers out of the world. Its value to its disciples does not rest necessarily, much less exclusively, on the contribution it makes directly to the problems of race relations, preventable poverty, and the threatening wars of the atomic age. Yet

these are the challenges which must be met if our civilization is to endure. And Toynbee is everlastingly right when he insists that civilizations which cannot progressively meet challenges are doomed to eventual death.

Notwithstanding the numerous exceptions, most religious believers, with varying degrees of emphasis and confidence, would insist that in a return to their God will be found strength for meeting these challenges. That may prove true, but unfortunately it is a truth by no means clearly established by the historic record of religion or by its present leadership in the solution of social problems.

In a world which profoundly needs a sense of unity and brotherhood, the historic effect of the great religions, whenever and wherever they have been firmly held, has been divisive. That this is true, let the blood shed by martyrs and soldiers under the banners of warring religions bear sorry testimony. The possessors of absolute truth derived from divine revelation or from the infallibility of Communist Marxism of necessity find tolerance a dubious virtue.

The legal abolition of untouchability in ancient India was a triumph of the human *spirit*. It was no triumph at all for the Hindu *religion* as that religion has been received by its devout believers. It was logically opposed by the most orthodox Hindus as an interference with Karma, the divine justice which orders that each man's lot in life is the result of his own conduct in a former existence the good and evil of which he himself has completely forgotten. Surely in this case what matters is not religion or belief in God but the kind of God in whom men believe.

There is today an emphasis on the revolutionary effects of vital religion. Donald Attwater has included a thoughtful essay by Melville Channing-Pearce on Søren Kierkegaard in his book, *Modern Christian Revolutionaries*. It requires considerable explanation to justify a description of Kierkegaard as a revolutionary in the field of politics or economics, to which the term is usually applied. That, I suspect, would be a title better claimed for his Danish contemporary, Bishop Grundtvig, a less rebellious churchman, who through folk schools did so much to stimulate the processes by which Denmark, with its meager resources, became the happiest of countries for the common man. Paradox has its place in philosophy. The liberal constitutions of the nineteenth century which Kierkegaard disliked had their limitations, but it goes beyond the bounds of permissible paradox for a revolutionary philosopher to declare, as did Kierkegaard, that such constitutions arouse "longing for an

Eastern despotism as something more fortunate to live under."

Even in the realm of philosophy it is significant that the existentialism of which, by common consent, he was the originator and which, for him, necessarily rested on a faith-knowledge of the existence of God is, under its modern prophet Sartre, completely irreligious. Its leading German exponents, agreeing largely in philosophy, differed so widely in the application of their belief that one of them, Heidegger, was an open supporter of Nazism, and the other, Jaspers, a courageous critic of it. And this is another bit of evidence that social conduct cannot be deduced infallibly from a knowledge of a man's theological or philosophical beliefs.

3

THERE was a moment recently in European history when some well-informed observers found hope, as against totalitarian Communism or reaction, in the emergence of Catholic or Christian parties in Western Europe. That hope may yet be justified, but at present those parties in Italy, France, and Germany have tended to become catchalls united only by opposition to Communism and without constructive political and economic programs. Unfortunately, the influence of the church or the hierarchies in the church has been mainly directed towards maintaining or winning power and prestige. The chief triumph of the Catholic Party in Italy has been the legal establishment of the Catholic Church in the new Italian state. This very dubious interpretation of the freedom of conscience for which supposedly a great war was won was achieved with the cynical help of the Communists, who immediately profited thereby in the Sicilian elections.

In the United States the churches, both Catholic and Protestant, have issued statements on social problems which should command respect. But they have had no quality of the trumpet to arouse men out of their apathy, bewilderment, and confusion.

Most preaching of what a little while ago was called the social gospel consists in the preacher's presentation of a warmed-over article from his favorite liberal journal sparingly seasoned with Scriptural quotations. At an hour when new total war threatens the destruction of our race and makes certain the doom of our civilization, there have been no strong demands for an effective renunciation of armaments, no determination to prosecute conflict on other terms than the wholesale destruction of war.

In so far as the church is Christian it represents a "reaction of gentleness," as opposed to the "reaction of violence" for which Communism stands. In practice, however, the church has so compromised itself that it is estopped from making clear this fundamental difference. The question, What contribution is religion making, or can religion make, to save our civilization from doom? is not merely a question of the meaning of religion, which in human experience has such diverse meanings; it is also a question of the adequacy of the highest religion we know to the task.

Here one naturally turns for light to Toynbee's brilliant religious interpretation of history. A complete judgment on Toynbee's magnificent work would require a degree of historical knowledge which I lack. Rather humbly I venture the statement that I am not sure whether Toynbee's work is essentially great history or great poetry. In either case it embodies great truth.

I find his explanation of the rise of civilization in response to challenge more completely satisfactory than his description of its disintegration with its mechanical "normal rhythm" of "rout-rally-rout-rally-rout-rally-rout: three and a half beats." In what Toynbee has already written there is, I think, an inadequate recognition of two facts: the first is that our immense technical progress has made or could soon make bitter poverty and economic insecurity for masses of people unnecessary and inexcusable. Here is a challenge whose potential significance is spiritual as well as practical.

A second and even more immediate challenge lies in the fact, made evident by the Second World War, that a repetition of total war might well leave its miserable survivors completely destitute of strength for rally and reconstruction. This reflection would have been in order had there been no atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The possibilities of bacteriological and atomic warfare for the physical and spiritual destruction of men make it inescapable.

It is somewhat unfair to deduce Toynbee's essentially religious message for our time or to criticize it without access to volumes as yet unwritten. He has himself told us that they will deal with problems raised by his study of disintegration. In the meantime Toynbee, like other great thinkers, is being variously interpreted on the basis of selected

sentences and paragraphs. One extreme was indicated by the woman who said: "Since Toynbee is so certain of the doom of our civilization there is nothing that folks like us can do about it. It is a real relief." That, I think, is scarcely Toynbee's position.

But I find myself left in doubt concerning the meaning and application of his definitely Christian hope for mankind. How far must the universal or particularist state and the universal church remain in opposition? Granting that the universal church of Christianity was a major factor in remodeling civilization after the fall of the Roman Empire, it certainly has not made the "kingdoms of this world" the "kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." In its relations with the state, the church itself has found corruption. On the other hand, I accept W. E. H. Lecky's well-known argument that the orthodox Christian doctrine of hell, with its eternal tortures, heightened man's inhumanity to man and the cruelty of states. Why should we be kinder than God to his enemies?

Toynbee comes out definitely for Christ rather than Caesar, and for the reaction of gentleness rather than violence, yet he felt compelled to interrupt his own great work and, like most of the rest of mankind, to give active service to his government in total war. In 1939 men had little but a choice between evils in the carrying on of organized society. Not on these terms will our civilization be saved or a better one established.

The salvation of society requires a rapid abolition of the ethical dualism implicit in the command that we "render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." And this ought to be a far greater concern to the propagandists who have returned to religion than is now apparent. Otherwise the somewhat indiscriminate praise of religion in all its forms, from medieval faith in a God more surely of Wrath than of Love, to Kafka's profound sense of human alienation, will do little to meet the desperate challenge of our times. And the new religious attitude, the new sense of human inadequacy, will fail as badly as did Catholic medievalism, the Protestant Reformation, or yesterday's humanistic rationalism to save an unfraternal civilization from the disintegration of social injustice and the destruction of war.

THE RECOVERY OF THE DAVIS CUP

by WALTER L. PATE

I

LAWN tennis is the most widely played athletic game. At the outbreak of World War II, fifty-one nations were members of the International Lawn Tennis Federation. In normal years, more than twenty-five countries challenge for the Davis Cup. In 1933, thirty-four competed. Within five months after V-J Day, twenty nations challenged Australia for the Cup. That so many gave thought to tennis and the Davis Cup under the grim post-war conditions shows how great the interest in the game is throughout the world.

The winning of the Davis Cup in 1946 by the United States marked the most extraordinary coincidence in the history of sport. In 1914, at the outbreak of World War I, Australasia (Australia and New Zealand) was the challenger, the United States the holding nation. Australasia, represented by Norman Brookes and the late Anthony Wilding, lifted the Cup by defeating Maurice McLoughlin, R. Norris Williams II, and Thomas Bundy, the American team, 3-2. The trophy made the long trek to Melbourne, where it remained in a vault undisturbed until after the war. In 1920 the United States became the challenger and "Big Bill" Tilden and the late "Little Bill" Johnston went "down under" and defeated Brookes and Gerald Patterson 5-0. In 1939 we held the Cup and Australia was again the challenger. The first match was played September 2, the day after Germany invaded Poland to start World War II. Again Australia (with New Zealand no longer included) won by the same score, 3-2, and again the Cup was taken for another long rest in a Melbourne vault. The year after hostilities ceased, Davis Cup com-

petition was resumed; the United States emerged the challenger and in 1946, at the Kooyong Stadium in Melbourne, defeated the Aussies by the same score as in 1920, 5-0. During our preparation for the contest we kept that 1920 score constantly in mind and were determined to duplicate it and to complete the extraordinary cycle of events. If we are to complete the coincidence, we must hold the Cup for six more years, as we did from 1920 through 1926.

Lawn tennis originated in England in the early 1870's and during the first few years was played mostly from the base line. As a result, the early players developed excellent forehand and backhand drives and little else. That situation prevailed until the late 1880's, when a young American, Oliver S. Campbell, who had been interested in the game for several years, developed an attack designed to overcome the advantage of the superior ground strokes of his elders. In 1890 Campbell's revolutionary style brought to him the Championship of the United States and was the beginning of what has come to be known as the "American type" of game. This style of attack is the chief reason why our country has won more International Tennis Championships than any other.

It was this type of game that won the Davis Cup for us in 1946. We lost the Cup in 1939 to Australia because the singles players on our team were essentially baseliners. They had sound ground strokes and excellent control, but they were content to remain in the back of the court, striving to keep the rallies going until their opponents made errors. Not so Kramer and Schroeder of the 1946 team. Harley Malcolm, the well-known Australian critic, described them as "the most aggressive net-rushing players the game has ever seen in any team." Since the start of the competition in 1900 I've seen many Davis Cup matches and I agree with him. That the Australians, whom impartial observers had rated as the best team in 1946,

A New York attorney, WALTER L. PATE is a tennis lover who witnessed the first Davis Cup match in 1900 and who has seen every great player in action since that time. As our non-playing captain, it was his responsibility to select and prepare the American squad for the Challenge Round in Australia in 1946. No team ever equaled the record scored by the Americans in the Davis Cup matches of last year. Now what are our chances for the challenge ahead?

could not cope with the speed, aggressiveness, and attack thrown at them, from the first point of the series to the last, is evident from the overwhelming score: 5 matches to 0; 15 sets to 2. To win the Cup the United States team played 4 rounds, scoring 20 matches to 0, 60 sets to 5, 393 games to 185.

No country has ever approached that record in the history of Davis Cup competition. It was the result of deciding early in 1946 on a definite plan of preparation and tactics. The scheme included using Ted Schroeder, if he regained his 1942 form, in both singles and doubles against Australia. We believed we would survive the preliminary rounds against the Philippines, Mexico, New Zealand, and the winner of the European Zone (which turned out to be Sweden) without great difficulty, and that's the way it happened. But we knew the Australian assignment would be a different matter, and to be successful an unprecedented attack of unrelenting speed and aggressiveness would be necessary. We realized that the physical condition of our players at the time of the test would have to be extraordinarily good to maintain the necessary pace and accuracy in the blistering Australian heat. I doubt if any team of athletes ever played with more attention to physical fitness than did our Davis Cup team of 1946. How well Schroeder succeeded in conditioning himself is told by his loss of weight: on leaving the Navy, in December, 1945, 172 pounds; on arriving at Melbourne, 155; and on December 26, 1946, the day he played Bromwich, 146, his correct weight when in training.

2

MUCH has been said and written about the selection of Schroeder over Parker to play singles, and I am still frequently asked for my reasons. To me the choice was so obvious that I was amazed that it caused such a furor. Parker is essentially a back-court player, while Schroeder relies on volleying and smashing from the net position. I doubt if today any player in the world can beat John Bromwich from the base line. Besides his uncanny accuracy and fine length, he has several advantages over all other players for playing a back-court game. These advantages save him much running and enable him to reach many balls that others less fortunately equipped would fail to return. In retrieving balls from either end of the base line he has to do less running than any other current player. On the right side, if the ball is near enough, he uses a two-handed grip; if the ball is too far away, he reaches with one hand and plays a conventional

forehand drive. On the left he strokes with a forehand drive, as would a "southpaw." Add to this style of play the advantage in reach enjoyed by a six-footer and the result is that he has to run much less than any opponent using a backhand drive.

All the members of our team who had seen Bromwich play in 1939 rated him an improved player in 1946, principally because of his drive from the left side. In 1939 that stroke was a defensive shot — accurate and steady, but soft and with a high trajectory. It is now an attacking weapon; flattened out and hit hard, it is perhaps his best shot. It was the opinion of our squad that he could not be beaten by steadiness — not even by Parker's superb accuracy. We remembered the 1939 Challenge Round at Philadelphia. The score was tied at two all, with only the Parker-Bromwich match remaining to decide the winner. The stage was set for a truly great struggle, but Parker was overwhelmed — 6-0, 6-3, 6-1 — in an uninteresting match consisting chiefly of long-drawn-out rallies from the base lines, during which at all times it was evident that the Cup was lost because Bromwich could out-Parker Parker.

In 1942 at Forest Hills in the final round of our Championship, Schroeder defeated Parker for the National crown and a few weeks later was in the Navy. During his period of service — over three years — he played no tennis, and when he doffed his uniform in January, 1946, he was twenty-five pounds overweight, was married, had a son and no job. At that time, we had just begun to formulate plans for the 1946 Davis Cup competition. Ted was a great player in 1942 both in singles and doubles. He and Kramer were our doubles champions in 1940 and 1941. If he played as he did in those years, our chances of success would be bright indeed. In January, while he was still in uniform, I discussed the matter with him. He reluctantly asked not to be considered, because he had to get to work to support his family.

No employer was likely to give a new man a two months' leave to play tennis in Australia or anywhere else. Furthermore, he would not be able to devote enough time to the practice and competition necessary to regain his form and physical condition. So the matter rested for several months, during which time he found a job — fortunately with a Los Angeles firm — and in the late afternoons and on week-ends he played regularly at the Los Angeles Tennis Club, whose membership bristles with fine players, the great Don Budge among them. Soon his touch started to come back and his weight began to drop. Although Budge is now a professional, he worked with Ted regularly

and without compensation. Nothing can help a tennis player so much as playing against and receiving instruction from Don Budge, and it is fortunate that his invaluable services are always available to help our Davis Cup teams.

Then late in the summer the good news came. Ted's employer not only gave him leave for the Australian trip, but urged him to go. And when Mrs. Schroeder joined in the urging, Ted capitulated. Although he had had little tournament play and could not come East for the Championship, I was confident that with a full month of intensive practice and training in Australia before the matches, he would make the grade. My confidence was strengthened by Schroeder's defeat of Parker in the semifinals of the Pacific Southwest Championship two weeks after the National Championship.

Before the deadline came to name our singles players for the Cup matches, it was necessary to consider all these matters, together with Parker's defeat by Tom Brown at Forest Hills, and the fact that Schroeder is a great match player with an aggressive attacking game. No important decision was reached until the matter involved had been discussed at length at a powwow in which the players took part. The vote in this case was 6 to 1. Ted justified our decision by beating Bromwich in a truly great match, during which he kept the pressure on his opponent at all times except during the fourth set, which he used as a breather after getting off to a bad start. The stroke analysis of the match tells the story better than words. Schroeder's placements and aces totaled 55, Bromwich's 27. Nearly all of Schroeder's were volleys and smashes, and most of Bromwich's were passing shots from deep court. While the Australian made fewer errors, his steadiness could not overcome that 2 to 1 margin in earned points. Once more the "American type" of game prevailed. I am sorry that Ollie Campbell wasn't there to see his methods triumph.

3

THE team was built around Jack Kramer, our 1946 champion; and, as we anticipated, he was magnificent. Playing better than ever before, he won each of his three matches without the loss of a set and established himself as the world's No. 1 player. In my opinion the game he played against the Aussies would defeat any player of recent years. We should have to go back to the Budge of 1937 and 1938 to find his master.

Of the other four players who made the trip,

Gardnar Mulloy was outstanding. At thirty-two he played the best tennis of his career and was very helpful in building up the morale of his teammates. Each Davis Cup contest consists of four singles matches and one doubles match. The country winning three of the five matches is the victor. Only four players may be named by each side. Two of them must be nominated to play all four singles contests and no substitution may be made except in case of incapacity or until one side has won three matches. Any two may play the doubles match. Consequently, two, three, or four players may be used to play all five matches.

The four players selected were Kramer, Schroeder, Parker, and Mulloy. Kramer and Schroeder were chosen to play all five matches. However, with the winning of both singles on the opening day and the doubles on the following, the Cup was won, and that made it possible for the captains to make substitutions for the remaining singles matches. As there was intense interest in the Kramer-Bromwich contest, no substitution was made for that match. Frank Parker was offered the opportunity to play Dinny Pails. I believe he could have won. He declined. Mulloy gladly accepted. We were pleased to reward him for his invaluable assistance in our practice and training. In an inspired mood he defeated Pails in straight sets in the best-played match of his many years of competition. Billy Talbert's troublesome knee and Tom Brown's attack of influenza prevented them from playing their best, and both displayed fine sportsmanship by asking not to be considered for the team.

In Australia there are more sports fans, in proportion to population, than in any other country. The attendance on each of the three days was the largest that ever witnessed a tennis match. The Kooyong Stadium was enlarged by 10,000 seats, making its capacity greater than that of Forest Hills or Wimbledon. All reserved seats were sold several months in advance of the event. Speculators charged the equivalent of \$12 for a single day's ticket. About 15,000 saw the matches each day. Their fine display of sportsmanship has never been surpassed by any tennis gallery in any country. The Australian newspapers gave more space to the event than ours do to a World's Series. On several days no news whatsoever appeared on the front page of some of the leading dailies other than tennis articles and illustrations.

From certain sensational newspaper articles it might appear that there were several clashes between the two teams and between myself and the officials. Actually there were two trifling incidents, which were considerably exaggerated in print.

When serving, if the first ball is good, Bromwich immediately drops the second ball so that his left hand will be free to join the right in holding the racket. During singles play the dropped ball rarely disturbs his opponent because he doesn't run in under his service and the ball is tossed backward so that it comes to rest behind the base line. In doubles, however, he follows his service to the net, as do all good players. He does not know until after he starts forward whether his first service is good. If it is, he drops the second ball, his forward motion is imparted to it, and it bounces and rolls toward the net — most of the time not stopping until well inside the service line. During the Victorian Championship, held prior to the Davis Cup matches, Talbert and Mulloy were playing Bromwich and Long. The moving ball distracted the Americans' concentration and they requested the umpire to ask Bromwich to throw the loose ball backward so that it would not roll on the court. Bromwich gracefully complied. There was no protest or further reference to the matter, and as far as the players and officials were concerned, that was the end of it. But not so with the reporters. They harped on the incident for several days and hounded the players and me for interviews about the "protest." They asked repeatedly if I would protest against Bromwich's dropping balls during the Cup matches and were disappointed when they received a negative reply.

When we asked permission to wear spikes on the slippery turf and were denied, the unimportant incident touched off another explosion in the press. But it was quickly forgotten, as it deserved to be.

Hospitality was showered upon us to the point of embarrassment. Invitations poured in at the rate of three or four a day, and obviously only a few could be accepted. It came to such a pass that I had to make an announcement in the press that we must regretfully decline all invitations to social functions because acceptance would interfere with our training program, but the announcement had little effect. We found the Australians to be a fine, wholesome, friendly people — nearer, perhaps, in temperament and outlook to the average American than any other nationality. We made many friends.

It is always nice to win and we were happy over our victory, but if we had lost, the long trip and the tremendous effort expended in preparation would have been well worth while because of the fine impression all our players made. There can be no doubt that our visit strengthened the friendly relationship already existing between Australians and Americans. The United States Ambassador to Australia, the Governor-General of Australia, the Lord

Mayor of Melbourne, United States General E. B. Seabee, wrote letters to the United States Lawn Tennis Association stressing that fact, and for several months after our return I received similar letters.

Our victory entitles us to hold the Cup for one year. We may retain it longer if we are fortunate, but eventually and to a certainty we'll lose it. That is as it should be, and that's the way its donor, the late Dwight Davis, planned it. In donating the trophy he had two objects in mind: first, to encourage international good will and understanding; and second, to stimulate interest in lawn tennis, which he believed to be the best of all sports. Both objects would be defeated if one nation should hold the Cup indefinitely. Interest in the competition would gradually die and there would be eventually another "The America's Cup" hidden from sight and out of mind in some vault.

There was but one sad note to an otherwise unblemished experience. Australia has produced, per capita, more than her share of great players, and I was delighted to renew friendship with many of them — Norman Brookes, Gerald Patterson, Jack Crawford, Jim Anderson, O'Hara Wood, Vivian McGrath, Jack Hawkes, Harry Hopman, and others. I recalled how superbly they performed in their youth, and then thought how sad it is that none of them will ever again be seen in action on the center court fighting for their country and glory. What a pity it is that tennis champions and beautiful women cannot resist the effect of advancing years. Some wit once said, "A wife at forty reminds me of a bank note. One should be able to exchange her for two twenties." How applicable that observation is to a tennis player!

After the Cup was won, it was presented to us in a formal ceremony in the stadium. Fifteen thousand people cheered as wholeheartedly as though their team had won. Now it was my responsibility to safeguard it and see that it got to New York. My first step was to put it in a vault and to insure it in transit for \$8000. The team had traveled by air on the way out and was to return the same way. We wanted to take the Cup with us on the plane.

The Cup is in three pieces — bowl, tray, and plinth — and is contained in a large hardwood case. When the case arrived at the airport, it was found to be too large to pass through any opening in the plane. The Australian National Airways solved the problem by making two smaller boxes. The combined weight of the trophy and cases was over 400 pounds. The cost of transporting the trophy by air from Melbourne to New York would normally ex-

ceed \$1000. It was carried all the way free of charge. Our Tennis Association is indebted to the A.N.A. for flying it across the Pacific, to the Western Air Lines for carrying it from San Francisco to Los Angeles, and to the Eastern Airlines for the last lap to New York.

4

How does our 1946 team compare with former Davis Cup teams? At the risk of making my neck vulnerable, I will venture an opinion. The first contest took place in 1900. I witnessed it and have seen all the great players in action since. On the form shown at Melbourne by Kramer, Schroeder, and Mulloy, no players before the great Australian-New Zealand combination of Norman Brookes and Tony Wilding would have had a chance against them. That brings us down to 1914. From then to the present time the only comparable teams are Johnston-Tilden, United States; Cochet-Borotra-LaCoste-Brugnon, France; Perry-Austin, Great Britain; and Budge-Mako-Riggs, United States. That rating ought to start something! There have been other great players, Ellsworth Vines and Maurice McLoughlin among them, but all were unfortunate in not having, when they were at the height of their games, at least one teammate in the same class.

The history of the Davis Cup competition follows a fairly definite pattern. Success has rarely come to a nation with but one great singles player and no player to team with him to make a formidable doubles combination. In Tilden and Johnston we had not only two great singles players but a fine doubles team. France was fortunate that her "Four Musketeers" were contemporaries. They comprised the best-balanced team any country was ever able to assemble, because two players could be relied on for singles and the other two for doubles, thereby giving the singles players a full day of rest and permitting the singles and doubles players to concentrate on their specialties. We had no great singles player in 1937 to rely on except Budge. He could be counted on for two matches, but three are required to win. Mako made an ideal partner for him in doubles. They were a very strong team.

What are our chances in the 1947 campaign? We shall count on Jack Kramer for two singles matches. If Ted Schroeder can give the time necessary to prepare himself adequately for the Challenge

Round, we shall have another fine singles player and also a strong doubles team, but at this writing it is problematical. Frank Parker is working hard on his game and is determined to regain our Championship and to make the team. Gardnar Mulloy and Tom Brown are also likely prospects.

This year Australia has challenged in the American Zone and will almost certainly come through, and has, I believe, better than an even chance to win the Interzone final against the European Zone winner. Australia's team, consisting of John Bromwich, Dinny Pails, Colin Long, and Geoff Brown, is most formidable. I pick them to become the challengers. Bromwich will certainly play both doubles and singles. Pails I think will have the other singles assignment. He has a strong orthodox game with a devastating service, fine ground strokes, and good stamina. Of all the Australian players, he and Geoff Brown have the most aggressive games. With the additional experience which he will acquire in Europe this summer, he will be very dangerous. Brown holds his racket with two hands for his forehand drive, hits hard, — much harder than Bromwich, — and has a very strong service. I think he relies unduly on those shots, with the result that other departments of his game suffer. Colin Long, the fourth member of the team, is husky. He has a powerful overhead and volleying game and may partner Bromwich in the doubles match. They will indeed make a strong combination. It is the same team which we defeated at Melbourne last December, with the exception of Brown, who replaced Adrian Quist.

The Australian officials believe that one of the factors contributing to the defeat of their team last year was lack of international competition before the Challenge Round, and have attempted to overcome that handicap by sending their players early this year to Europe for several months of competition, winding up with the British Championship at Wimbledon. That program, I am sure, will improve their play considerably, and means a tougher assignment for us. If they become the challengers, we shall be fortunate to stop them. They may take the famous Cup from us, but there is something we brought back with us from Australia last January that they never can take from us. That is the memory of their friendliness, rare hospitality, and outstanding sportsmanship. After their visit to us this summer, may they take with them similar recollections of us.

TO A SNAKE

by EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Poor, dying thing: it was my dog, not I,
That did for you.
I gave you a wide arc, and moved to pass.

And yet, I was not sad that you should die;
You jarred me so; you were too motionless
And sudden, coiled there in the grass.

Now, you are coiled no longer. Now
Your splendid, streakèd back is to the ground.
Your beautiful, light-scarlet blood is spattered,
And shines in dreadful dewdrops all around.

And that white, ugly belly you had not confessed,
So naked, so unscrolled with patterns, is at last exposed.

Oh — oh — I do not like to see
A fellow-mortal's final agony!
We shared this world all summer until now!
Now, — off you go.

All upside-down you lie, less looped than flung.
And all but done for.
And yet, — with head still raised; and that red, flickering, tongue.

CRAMMING FOR THE CAVALRY

by SIR OSBERT SITWELL

English author and critic, SIR OSBERT SITWELL is now writing one of the most entertaining silk-spun autobiographies of our time. In *Left Hand, Right Hand!* he told of his family heritage, and in lovely detail of Renishaw Hall in Derbyshire, which has been the family seat since the seventeenth century. In *The Scarlet Tree* he wrote of his parents and of the painfully inadequate Victorian education to which he and his sister Edith were subjected. Osbert graduated from Eton, and then his father, despite the boy's protests, began to plan for his military career. "Knocking about with a sword," his father assured him, "provided excellent exercise: and proved splendid training for afterlife." — THE EDITOR.

I

MY accomplishments as a boy, and my lack of them, have been duly charted in *Left Hand, Right Hand!* and *The Scarlet Tree*. I have confessed that at school, and for long after leaving, I knew no French — yet only yesterday I met an old companion from Bloodsworth, who, falling in to tell me of his son's school days, and then reverting to our own, remarked, "We didn't think much of you, I remember — you were too good at French!"

This summing-up shows once more how difficult is the path of objective truth, even when the writer is most sure of the accuracy of his statements. Nevertheless, this much I can say for certain: the phrase that seemed to sound like a theme through the miserable composition of my school days, and subsequently through my career in the Army, and occurred in every report, public or confidential, was the truncated but haunting sentence: —

MIGHT DO BETTER IF HE CHOSE.

Such, however, was not my belief, for I was most diffident, though full, as well, of senseless pride.

By disposition I was fond of nature, but preferred to it, as I prefer today, the study of art and the enjoyment to be obtained therefrom. And in nature itself, I was more interested by those things that approached nearest to art, flowers and shells and trees and falling water. Outwardly, my character had altered: for when I had gone to school, I had been intensely sociable, but now I had grown shy, as well: and, by another contradiction born of my schooling, had become both

melancholy and gay, being as silent with those I disliked, as talkative with those I liked. I loved the solitude as much as I enjoyed, too, the life of cities. Extremely high-spirited as I was, my greatest advantage was that my constitution did not allow me to be depressed, even by the most severe occurrences, for more than forty-eight hours at a stretch. That I must have inherited; its origin was no doubt physical, and connected with my large frame — I am over six feet, and even then was by no means meager — and with my whole physical setup; for the fair and florid are perhaps less prone to melancholy than the dark of hair and skin. In addition, I suffered to an extraordinary degree — and, looking back, this seems strange in a young man of seventeen or eighteen — from boredom: a fact that deeply shocked my father. People, he said, were never bored in medieval times. It was a modern and degenerate emotion. And I recall that once, forgetting his attitude in this matter, I complained of feeling bored, and he reproved me with the words "I never *allow* myself to feel bored." He became very angry when I unwisely retorted, "That's just the difference between us — I never allow *myself* to bore other people!"

This boredom, perhaps, was symptomatic of the artist, constituting a premonition of the feeling he experiences in those terrible moments of repose, when he finds himself unable to create. . . . At any rate, works of art, to go to a picture gallery or concert, or to read great poetry, were the only things that lifted it from me. About works of art, as about people, I had always possessed a great

and consuming curiosity. I would be happy for hours, talking to someone I had not met before, and reading the strange book of his or her character. There were other qualities, too, that I knew in my heart to be derived from my heredity; among them, the more than ordinary share of pride and vanity that in those days I possessed.

2

THESE qualities were humbled every day by my father's continual snubbings and condemnation of all my ways; they were to be further mortified by events. He had begun to make the most singular plans for his children, when they grew up — or so, at least, it always appeared to me. Often he used to deplore the strange chance by which, having taken so much trouble to get intelligent children, his whole early life having been modeled, apparently, on a sort of Nietzschean-Darwinian uplift scheme towards that goal, we three had been sent down — or up — to him. Just as Dr. Arnold had prayed before the procreating of his children, with what beneficial results we all know, so my father, representative of a less pious and seemingly more scientific generation, had entered upon periods of the most rigorous training, both physical and mental — and look what he had received for his trouble! It was really very unfair, most disappointing.

And that the Life Force should have shoved my sister onto him was even more patently unjust than that It should have allocated to him my brother or myself. Birth, no less than marriage, was, plainly, a lottery; but whereas he had gone in for it to obtain for the next generation a straight nose and charm, he had drawn a booby prize, an aquiline nose and a body inhabited by an alien and fiery spirit. . . . It was difficult to know, really, where to begin the list of just complaints.

The girl was grown-up now, and seemed to have developed a most objectionable sense of pity, which made her an uneasy companion for one. You never knew what she might say or do. Once, though her whole allowance was only fifty pounds a year, he had caught her giving five shillings to a beggar. "Such a mistake!" And, after all, it was really his money. He should have been consulted. She seemed unable to pass a tramp or a beggar without giving him something, whereas the correct thing to do was not to see a person of that kind. . . . There had also been that unfortunate episode at Bournemouth.

I asked what the "unfortunate episode" was.

It had occurred thus: My sister had been paying a long visit to my grandmother Sitwell, to whom she was much attached, at Bournemouth; in which camping ground of godly invalids, everywhere breathing heavily in red-tiled shelters, pitched *à la japonaise* under pine trees, or reclining on beds and sofas under turrets and pepperpots of red brick and rough cast, behind luxuriant hedges of arbutus and fuchsia, over which they can distinguish the spires, rain-gray, of many churches, my grandmother had taken a house. The prevailing atmosphere of religion and old age may at times have been a little uncongenial: but the life to which my sister was exposed at home made her eager to pay as many visits to my grandmother as possible; at least she was always treated with kindness and consideration, and was allowed that dignity which is so precious to a young human being.

At first, therefore, my sister was very happy, for she was away from home. But the circles of visiting clergy that, wherever my grandmother might be, at once sprang up round the old lady like a circle of plainly inedible fungi took soon to wrestling daily with my sister over the poems of Algernon Charles Swinburne, with whose works she was at the time intoxicated. They were immoral, the toadstools pronounced, and she should not be permitted to read them. Canon Groucher urged on my grandmother that they should be impounded and burned. Any reasonable girl should be content, so far as poetry was concerned, with the works of T. E. Brown and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. In the course of time, my sister became so much enraged by the continual attacks made upon her favorite poet that she determined to show her feeling for him in a manner that could not be mistaken.

Very early, then, one lovely September morning, she had flitted, having given no previous notice to my grandmother of her going, and, accompanied by her maid, had boarded the small boat that plied from Bournemouth to Ventnor, Isle of Wight. There, a few hours later, under the bright pennons of the summer weather, with its fleecy white clouds and high-flung seas, a singular spectacle must have greeted the curious eyes of any passers-by. A tall, fair, rather thin young lady, paler than usual after her rough journey, yet with color coming and going from the love and defiance in her heart, disembarked, bearing a large sheaf of red roses: after her, the second figure in this frieze of two, came, with faltering steps, a woman of about thirty, with all her lady's maid trimmings disheveled by the crossing, her face a sour green,

and wearing this morning an expression of the plainest condemnation of the whole enterprise in which she found herself engaged, and of dislike (if the spectator could discern that much) both for poetry and for the sea; she carried a jug of milk, a honeycomb, a wreath of bay leaves, and the young lady's coat.

After a few moments, my sister found an open cab, drawn by a horse so old that Swinburne himself as a boy might have ridden behind it, and drove, with her maid still disapproving, through lanes just tinged with autumn's first fine gold, to Bonchurch; where, alighting, the procession entered the churchyard. After a furious battle with a sexton, who objected to such foreign ways, Edith triumphed and, bending low under an enormous fuchsia, its tasseled flowers of scarlet and purple trailing over a headstone, in the Grecian mode poured the milk, and placed the wreath of bay leaves, the honeycomb, and the red roses upon the grave of Swinburne. . . . This safely accomplished, she drove back with her maid to Ventnor, and returned to Bournemouth and my grandmother. An appalling storm broke and long raged round her head, alternating with calm patches of religious resignation.

My father, when news of this exploit reached him, was most displeased: it was plain that the girl would never make a success of anything. He began to lay his plans. Later on, in a year or two, she had better enter the shop, near Piccadilly, of a once fashionable photographer, whose bankrupt business he had been obliged to take over in cancellation of a bad debt. He could afford to pay her a salary of a pound a week, and she could find out of it her own money for dress and all the pleasures to which in these days the young considered they possessed a perfect right!

It was his elder son — well, that entailed its own place, *ex officio*, in the Universe. For the rest, he would reserve judgment on what it would be best for me to do, until it became clearer for what precise profession I showed least aptitude and liking. But for my brother Sacheverell's future, he had already arranged: he could either become a lawyer in Sheffield or mineral agent to the Sitwell Estate; which in either case could offer him a considerable amount of work, which he must, of course, for his part, undertake to execute at special rates. ("In late medieval times, younger sons often did such things, went in for trade, and lived in provincial cities, Sheffield or Birmingham. . . . Charmin' life in many ways." "Certainly not! Why should provincial cities be different from what they are now, in medieval times? . . .

Such a mistake to quibble.") . . . To return to plans for my own future, it was not so important to make his own as to prevent mine.

3

DURING these years, I could do little that was right. Golf had succeeded puffball, as puffball ping-pong, for the test of a man's ability as leader. Everywhere in England and America, statesmen were already preparing their triumphs of 1914 and 1939 by spending long days on the golf course, and long nights at the bridge table. One would be lost in an uncharted world without some understanding of these games. But I showed no capacity for golf — and so, every day in the summer holidays of 1909, when I was sixteen, this singular man would send for me, and storm at me about my failures in this respect, as in many others.

There seemed no one to help me. Sacheverell was too young, though he always fought valiantly on my behalf. Edith was still away a good deal, in Paris and Berlin and staying with friends — and, had she been at home, her own state of subjugation would only have been worse than mine, and she could have done nothing to aid me. Nor did my mother seem now to possess any inclination to come to my rescue. Her own affairs were now starting to worry her. She complained, too, of feeling middle-aged. She attended to nothing in the house, chose no wallpaper or cover, undertook no household duties — nor, indeed, would she have been allowed to do so by my father, had she attempted it. She contented herself with sitting in her room, among bunches of tuberoses and sweet geranium, reading innumerable newspapers. Occasionally she would give vent to a favorite maxim. One I remember well, because in subsequent years it seemed strange to hear it coming from the lips of the mother of three authors: "*Never put pen to paper.*" . . . In reality, however, this was said in allusion to the growing number of quarrels — mostly on matters of business, for he did not write letters to friends — in which, owing to his habit of letting his pen indulge in comments and strictures that were far more disagreeable than those he was accustomed to pass orally, my father involved himself.

So courteous in ordinary conversation with strangers, and in many directions both kind and imaginative, it yet seemed as if, when my father took up a pen, he just could not put things in an agreeable way. On the contrary, he went to the greatest trouble to render his letters sufficiently

unpleasant, writing them over and over again in quest of perfection. So well did he succeed in this respect that one near relative, and a trustee of his marriage settlement, came so greatly to dread the sight of my father's handwriting on an envelope that he taught his valet to distinguish it, pick it out, and burn it, without informing his master. Let me give an instance of how he wrote to me when I was eighteen: —

Thanks for the accounts. I am always struck by how much better off you are than I am. You give a footman ten shillings when five shillings at the outside is the proper thing, and porters a shilling, when I give sixpence. It is very generous, but reminds me of Jack Brale, who, when he travelled with me, bought franc cigars when he could put them down in my hotel bill, and half-penny ones when he had to pay for himself.

Yet, since I was inexperienced, and my fault venial, all that was necessary was for him to tell me quietly, without flourish, that in his opinion I was inclined to give too much. Ascetism had begun to constitute for others a duty; but the standard no longer applied to himself. The chief and most noticeable point in his private relationship was a system of fault-finding, as with a divining rod, that continually grew and strengthened. This, in its effect, militated against his ever getting the best out of the people round him: in fact, to sum up in the words my agent has frequently used to me in the past, "The worst of Sir George is, he's so damned discouraging!"

To the disagreeable letters he wrote — and in the next few years I was to receive my fair share of them — my father would refer in the phrase "a rap over the knuckles" . . . "I had to give Major Viburne [who was supposed to be keeping an eye on the household expenses] a rap over the knuckles." . . . And here let me offer an example, more subtle than some. For the past twenty years, my father had been writing books, chiefly of local, genealogical, or antiquarian interest. Since his serious illness of a few years before, he had written with more regularity, and in 1909 John Murray had published his remarkable volume of essays on the principles governing garden architecture. A year or two later, at the period with which I am now beginning to deal, he produced a small volume entitled *The Pilgrim*. These few pages, bound in brown paper, were to have formed a chapter in the family history — at which, his *magnum opus*, he worked for so many years, though it unfortunately remained uncompleted at the time of his death in 1943 — and concerned an ancestor, called Walter de Boys or del Bosco, father to Symon

Cytewel, first of our name, who died on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the year 1250 or 1251.

This little book abounds in gothic inglenooks, and contains a great deal about the wild flowers that grew then — or, at any rate subsequently, in the author's imagination — round the gloomy windings of the Rother, the waters of which river are today dark and desolate as those of Lethe. As in many books written by gifted amateurs, and dedicated to the presentation of an idealized past, all the flowers of the year are out at the same season.

A letter from my father to his agent Turnbull shows that the author had sent his agent the proof or manuscript of *The Pilgrim*, and had asked for — and, in fact, received — his advice. The phrasing, I think, indicates that, after the manner of most authors who forward their work, accompanied by a request for "honest criticism," that which he really sought, indeed craved, was by no means the reader's frank opinion, of which he would be resentful, but, in its place, applause, congratulation, and fulsome flattery. In this letter of his, one of my favorites among all of them, to me the sound of his voice underlines every word — and that, I believe to be one of the main though least recognized ingredients of literary style. The sudden breaks, the snubs, the bland assumptions — that concerning garlic is particularly delightful — the mixture of pretending to agree, and, even, to admit error, and then the sudden masterly bounce out from ambush to administer a sharp "rap over the knuckles" — all these are familiar to me.

March 26th. 1911.

THE CURZON HOTEL,
MAYFAIR, W.I.

DEAR PEVERIL TURNBULL

So many thanks for your note on *The Pilgrim*. I think you were a very sound critic, and some of your suggestions I have adopted, though not all. You were quite right as to the sentence "with wares of cloth and bronze and amber" in it, but the only thing really necessary was to replace the comma after "amber" with a semi-colon. The punctuation was wrong as it stood. *No!* — hollies *were* cut for feeding sheep in the winter before roots were invented. Gorse *is* very black when the buds first open. And I think the smell of garlic charming at a distance — though not too near. Nor can I agree with you when you say that one must remember weeds are weeds. I do not think there are any such things. You should not look at them from the utilitarian point-of-view. . . .

Yours very sincerely,
GEORGE R. SITWELL.

Nor was the letter to which he refers the only criticism he received. Well do I remember the

time when *The Pilgrim* came out, because, while we were at Renishaw, my sister took up a copy which my father had left lying on a table in the ballroom, and, as she read it, becoming a little fatigued by the Wardour Street panoply of it, seized a pen, inserted in one place an omission mark after the recurrent name "Walter de Boys," and wrote above it the two words, "*né* Hopkins"; a simple joke, but one received by the author of the book with particular displeasure.

4

DURING the summer of 1909, while at home, I was in such continual disgrace that I hid myself as often, and for as long, as possible, and, if I heard my name called by my father, kept out of the way, since I knew it must portend something of an unpleasant nature, another explanation or rebuke, either in private, with a formal air of solemnity, or — this in order to satisfy a sense of power — in front of people for whom I did not care. What my character needed to regenerate it, my father told me constantly, was for me to have to do something unpleasant every — and, if possible, all — day: a doctrine born of the puritanical sense of sin which I have already noticed as so strange a trait in a man of his origin and outlook in other directions.

What was there? What tasks offered themselves, that were sufficiently odious and oppressive? . . . Then an idea came to him. I had said that the idea of the Army as a profession did not appeal to me. The very thing! A fine, healthy time in the open air; and knocking about with a sword provided excellent exercise; and proved splendid training for afterlife. (This constituted always a favorite phrase of his, but I was never clear in my mind whether it referred to some later incorporeal state of existence — in which in any case he himself did not believe — or to a subsequent period of this earthly life. . . . At any rate, if anyone made some such remark to him as, let us say, "Poor old Miss Catesby! Have you heard? At the age of seventy-eight, she's lost all her money, and been obliged to take a post in an office," he would always reply comfortably, "Such a good training for afterlife!")

What branch, then, of the service, should it be? Well, I particularly hated horses, so it had better be the Cavalry. A wonderful life in the open air, which gave one a good appetite — one felt fit for anything. And what an opportunity to use your brains — you could always play polo. He proceeded

to recall to my memory what he had told me before; that, some five or ten years previously, when he had been in command of the local Volunteers, a general who had come down to inspect the regiment had said to him, "When politics took you away, the British Army lost a Napoleon." Then, again, he would go on to sketch life in the Army; of which he knew a good deal, for he had read Froissart and other Chronicles, had been as a young man in the Yeomanry, as well as later in the Volunteers, and had talked to Major Viburne about it. One never felt so well as under canvas! And if it was bad weather, one could always go and sleep at home.

Instead, then, of being sent to Oxford, where — who knows? — I might really have learned something at last, I was packed off, very suddenly, to an Army crammer's; an institution now defunct, rendered happily obsolete by the reformed system of obtaining commissions.

I rather enjoyed it. I had, indeed, dreaded going there, and when I first arrived, had been ill at ease. Every moment I could spare, I spent in reading Shakespeare — to my surprise, nobody seemed to object. There was no attempt, as there would have been at Eton, to "rag" my room, or burn the books. For the assembled "young gentlemen" — in the terms which Fagin applied to his similar select band — though most of them, refractory by nature, and uncompetitive in spirit at examinations, had been sent here by dissatisfied, and often enraged, parents, as to a more genteel Borstal Institution, showed themselves to be unusually tolerant; perhaps because they were treated as grown-up persons. Of course, there were exceptions to the Borstal trend, and among this section I soon found friends: notably two, who remained among my most intimate until they were killed five years later in the First Holocaust. These were James Glass, a young man of intelligence, feeling, and the highest spirits, and Rafe Barclay, a great-nephew of Trelawny, who seemed to bring into a duller world something of his uncle's vehemence.

And here, moreover, in this crammer's, I found myself, for the first time, popular with my comrades. In consequence, the months passed quickly. I did not do much work: but for French had as tutor a genuine Frenchman, and I learned at last to speak it after a fashion. Moreover, I was encouraged by the teacher of English to write essays, at which he thought I showed some ability. He was a Scot, and I have always remembered his looking up from an essay of mine he was reading, and saying, in his Doric voice, with an expression

of delight, "Hist! It's an epigram!" He then read aloud to my fellow internees some rather feeble but snappy sentence which I had written. It was almost the only word of commendation that I had earned throughout the lengthy days of my education.

In the world outside, the usual calm prevailed. Little seemed to happen. King Edward still reigned. It seemed unlikely that the great historic calm would break—why should it? If Germany went to war—and no other foe was to be seen—she would gain nothing. And the world now recognized that it was governed solely by the wish for economic welfare. . . . The prospect of an Army career seemed pointless.

5

I SAW little of such friends as I had possessed before this time, for, perhaps owing to the punitive nature of the establishment, holidays were as rare as must be those from Borstal, and never seemed to coincide with holidays at other places, such as Eton; to which my brother had now passed. But I contrived to see a certain amount of him, motor-ing over to Windsor from time to time, to meet him. When I did so, if possible, I avoided passing through Eton itself, so much did it depress my spirit.

The summer before I went to my crammer's, I was, as I have said, in continual disgrace at home. I suppose all this time I must have been very much attached to my father, or I could not have been so wretched. My self-respect had entirely perished; for of what use was I, if my father so little esteemed me? After all, he was the most intelligent and learned person of his generation who was within my range, the most intellectually developed and nervously equipped. But my feeling for him must, within the space of a year or two, have very much altered, until, resembling in truth for once my relative whom I have mentioned, I would feel ill for an entire day at the sight of his handwriting on an envelope.

By the middle of December, 1911, it was recognized that I was a failure, too, at the Establishment for Young Gentlemen in which I had by then spent a little over two years. Indeed, I had con-

trived that autumn not to pass the Entrance Examination into Sandhurst—in those days no easy matter, especially for one who, like myself, suffers from a race-horselike eagerness to win, even if engaged against his will in the contest. After the result of this examination had been announced, a pause of a month or more ensued; during which period I seemed to be in a No-Man's-Land, a vacuum, a spiritual Coventry in Pont Street, London, where my parents had taken a large, hideous, and rather haunted house.

No leaf moved. One waited for the storm, and wondered what maneuvers, if any, were taking place behind the screen of silence. . . . Sacheverell was on holiday, and we spent much time together. I was now just turned nineteen, and was promoted to have a shilling a day as pocket money; it did not go very far. However, we would contrive somehow or other to visit the current exhibitions, or to go roller-skating at Olympia, where the idle of all ages bumped and rolled and clanked and danced along the vast wooden floor to music; for it was the moment of one of the periodic crazes for this form of exercise.

Then a portent occurred: a General Sitwell, a cousin of whom I had never heard previously, now sprang, fully accoutred, from the pavement of Pont Street. He was a singularly simple, high-principled, courageous, and delightful man, and I grew later to appreciate his character—but at the time I did not regard him with much favor. He and my father were much closeted together; the silence that surrounded me became greater. Something, at last, was in the air: what could it be? Even Henry, the butler, who usually appeared to possess a special insight into the workings of my father's mind, could not help me.

Then, one morning, I found out: for I read, suddenly turning a page of the newspaper that had just arrived, that a 2nd Lieut. F. O. S. Sitwell had been granted a commission. For a moment, I wondered who this stranger, bearing my name and the initials that I associated with school life and had grown to hate so bitterly, could be. . . . Then I understood. . . . I was now under Military Law. For me to refuse to fall in with these plans would have rendered me guilty of mutiny.

It seemed better to go quietly.

(To be continued)



SHUT A FINAL DOOR

by TRUMAN CAPOTE

WALTER, listen to me: if everyone dislikes you, works against you, don't believe they do so arbitrarily: you create these situations for yourself."

Anna had said that, and, though his healthier side told him she intended nothing malicious (if Anna was not a friend, then who was?), he'd despised her for it, had gone around telling everybody how much he despised Anna, what a bitch she was: that woman! he said, don't trust that Anna: this plain-spoken act of hers — nothing but a cover-up for all her repressed hostility; terrible liar, too, can't believe a word she says: dangerous, my God! And naturally all he said went back to Anna, so that when he called about a play-opening they'd planned attending together she told him: "Sorry, Walter, I can't afford you any longer: I understand you very well, and I have a certain amount of sympathy: it's very compulsive, your malice, and you aren't too much to blame, but I don't want ever to see you again because I'm not so well myself that I can afford it." But why? and what had he done? Well, sure, he'd gossiped about her, but it wasn't as though he'd meant it, and after all, as he said to Jimmy Bergman (now there was a two-face if ever there was one), what was the use of having friends if you couldn't discuss them objectively?

He said you said they said we said round and round. Round and round, like the paddle-bladed

ceiling-fan wheeling above; turning and turning, stirring stale air ineffectively, it made a watch-tick sound, counted seconds in the silence. Walter inched to a cooler part of the bed, and closed his eyes against the dark little room. At seven that evening he'd arrived in New Orleans, at seven-thirty he'd registered in this hotel, an anonymous side-street place. It was August, and it was as though bonfires burned in the red night sky, and the unnatural Southern landscape, observed so assiduously from the train, and which, trying to sublimate all else, he retraced in memory, intensified a feeling of having traveled to the end, the falling off.

But why he was here in this stifling hotel in this faraway town he could not say. There was a window in the room, but he could not seem to get it open, and he was afraid to call the bellboy (what queer eyes that kid had!), and he was afraid to leave the hotel, for what if he got lost? and if he got lost, even a little, then he would be lost altogether. He was hungry; he hadn't eaten since breakfast, so he found some peanut-butter crackers left over from a package he'd bought in Saratoga, and washed them down with a finger of Four Roses, the last. It made him sick: he vomited in a wastebasket, collapsed back on the bed, and cried until the pillow was wet. After a while he just lay there in the hot room shivering, just lay there and watched the slow-turning fan; there was no beginning to its action, and no end: it was a circle.

An eye, the earth, the rings of a tree, everything is a circle, and all circles, Walter said, have a center. It was crazy for Anna to say what had happened was his own doing. If there was anything wrong

A talented young Southerner who is now finishing his first novel, TRUMAN CAPOTE sends us this story which is in essence a study of malice — human, repellent, and pathetic. His short stories have appeared in various magazines, and in the O. Henry collection for 1946.

with him really, then it had been made so by circumstances beyond his control, by, say, his churchly mother, or his father, an insurance official in Hartford, or his older sister, Cecile, who'd married a man forty years her senior: "I just wanted to get out of the house," that was her excuse, and, to tell the truth, Walter had thought it reasonable enough.

But he did not know where to begin thinking about himself, did not know where to find the center. The first telephone call? No, that had been only three days ago and, properly speaking, was the end, not the beginning. Well, he could start with Irving, for Irving was the first person he'd known in New York.

Now Irving was a sweet little Jewish boy with a remarkable talent for chess and not much else: he had silky hair, and pink baby cheeks, and looked about sixteen: actually he was twenty-three, Walter's age, and they'd met at a bar in the Village. Walter was alone and very lonesome in New York, and so when this sweet little Irving was friendly he decided maybe it would be a good idea to be friendly, too — because you never can tell. Irving knew a great many people, and everyone was very fond of him, and he introduced Walter to all his friends.

And there was Margaret. Margaret was more or less Irving's girl friend. She was only so-so looking (her eyes bulged, there was always a little lipstick on her teeth, she dressed like a child of ten), but she had a hectic brightness which Walter found attractive. He could not understand why she bothered with Irving at all. "Why do you?" he said, on one of the long walks they'd begun taking together in Central Park.

"Irving is sweet," she said, "and he loves me very purely, and who knows: I might just as well marry him."

"A damn fool thing to do," he said, "Irving could never be your husband because he's really your little brother. Irving is everyone's little brother."

Margaret was too bright not to see the truth in this. So one day when Walter asked if he might not make love to her she said all right she didn't mind if he did. They made love often after that.

Eventually Irving heard about it, and one Monday there was a nasty scene in, curiously enough, the same bar where they'd met. There had been that evening a party in honor of Kurt Kuhnhardt (Kuhnhardt Advertising), Margaret's boss, and she and Walter had gone together, afterwards stopping by this bar for a nightcap. Except for Irving and a couple of girls in slacks the place was empty. Irving was sitting at the bar, his cheeks quite pink, his eyes rather glazed: he looked like a little boy playing grownup, for his legs were too short to reach the

stool's footrest; they dangled doll-like. The instant Margaret recognized him she tried to turn around and walk out, but Walter wouldn't let her. And anyway, Irving had seen them: never taking his eyes from them, he put down his whiskey, slowly climbed off the stool, and, with a kind of sad, ersatz toughness, strutted forward.

"Irving, dear —" said Margaret, and stopped, for he'd given her a terrible look.

His chin was trembling. "You go away," he said, and it was as though he were denouncing some childhood tormentor, "I hate you." Then, almost in slow motion, he swung out and, as if he clutched a knife, struck Walter's chest: it was not much of a blow, and when Walter did nothing but smile, Irving slumped against a jukebox, screaming: "Fight me, you damned coward; come on, and I'll kill you, I swear before God I will." So that was how they left him.

Walking home, Margaret began to cry in a soft tired way. "He'll never be sweet again," she said. And Walter said: "I don't know what you mean." "Oh yes you do," she told him, her voice a whisper, "yes you do; the two of us, we've taught him how to hate. Somehow I don't think he ever knew before."

Walter had been in New York now four months. His original capital of five hundred dollars had fallen to fifteen, and Margaret lent him money to pay his January rent at the Brevoort: why, she wanted to know, didn't he move some place cheaper? Well, he told her, it was better to have a good address. And what about a job? When was he going to start working? Or was he? Sure, he said, sure, as a matter of fact he thought about it a good deal. But he didn't intend fooling around with just any little jerkwater thing that came along: he wanted something good, something with a future, something in, say, advertising. All right, said Margaret, maybe she could help him; at any rate, she'd speak with her boss, Mr. Kuhnhardt.

2

THE K.K.A., so-called, was a middle-sized agency, but, as such things go, very good, the best. Kurt Kuhnhardt, who'd founded it in 1925, was a curious man with a curious reputation: a lean, fastidious German, a bachelor, he lived in an elegant black house on Sutton Place, a house interestingly furnished with, among other things, three Picassos, a superb music-box, South Sea Island masks, and a burly Danish youngster, the houseboy. He invited occasionally some one of his

staff in to dinner, whoever was favorite at the moment, for he was continually selecting protégés: it was a dangerous position, these alliances being, as they were, whimsical and uncertain: the protégé found himself checking the want ads when, just the evening previous, he'd dined most enjoyably with his benefactor. During his second week at the K.K.A., Walter, who had been hired as Margaret's assistant, received a memorandum from Mr. Kuhnhardt asking him to lunch, and this, of course, excited him unspeakably.

"Kill-joy?" said Margaret, straightening his tie, plucking lint off a lapel. "Nothing of the sort. It's just that — well, Kuhnhardt's wonderful to work for so long as you don't get too involved — or you're likely not to be working: period."

Walter knew what she was up to; she didn't fool him a minute; he felt like telling her so, too, but restrained himself: it wasn't time yet. One of these days, though, he was going to have to get rid of her, and soon. It was degrading, his working for Margaret. And besides, the tendency from now on would be to keep him down. But nobody could do that, he thought, looking into Mr. Kuhnhardt's sea-blue eyes, nobody could keep Walter down.

"You're an idiot," Margaret told him. "My God, I've seen these little friendships of K.K.'s a dozen times, and they don't mean a damn: he used to palsy-walsy around with the switchboard operator: all K.K. wants is someone to play the fool. Take my word, Walter, there aren't any short cuts: what matters is how you do your job."

He said: "And have you complaints on that score? I'm doing as well as could be expected."

"It depends on what you mean by expected," she said.

One Saturday not long afterwards he made a date to meet her in Grand Central. They were going up to Hartford to spend the afternoon with his family, and for this she'd bought a new dress, new hat, and shoes. But he did not show up. Instead, he drove out on Long Island with Mr. Kuhnhardt, and was the most awed of three hundred guests at Rosa Cooper's debut ball. Rosa Cooper (nee Kuppermann) was heiress to the Cooper Dairy Products: a dark, plump, pleasant child with an unnatural British accent, the result of four years at Miss Jewett's. She wrote a letter to a friend named Anna Stimson, who subsequently showed it to Walter: "Met the divinest man. Danced with him six times, a divine dancer. He is an Advertising Executive, and is terribly divinely good-looking. We have a date — dinner and the theater!"

Margaret did not mention the episode, nor did

Walter. It was as though nothing had happened, except that now, unless there was office business to discuss, they never spoke, never saw each other. One afternoon, knowing she would not be at home, he went to her apartment and used a passkey given him long ago; there were things he'd left here, clothes, some books, his pipe; rummaging around collecting all this he discovered a photograph of himself scrawled red with lipstick: it gave him for an instant the sensation of falling in a dream. He also came across the only gift he'd ever made her, a bottle of L'Heure Bleue, still unopened. He sat down on the bed, and, smoking a cigarette, stroked his hand over the cool pillow, remembering the way her head had lain there, remembering, too, how they used to lie here Sunday mornings reading the funnies aloud, Barney Google and Dick Tracy and Joe Palooka.

He looked at the radio, a little green box; they'd always made love to music, any kind, jazz, symphonies, choir programs: it had been their signal, for whenever she'd wanted him, she'd said, "Shall we listen to the radio, darling?" Anyway, it was finished, and he hated her, and that was what he needed to remember. He found the bottle of perfume again, and put it in his pocket: Rosa might like a surprise.

In the office the next day he stopped by the water-cooler and Margaret was standing there. She smiled at him fixedly, and said: "Well, I didn't know you were a thief." It was the first overt disclosure of the hostility between them. And suddenly it occurred to Walter he hadn't in all the office a single ally. Kuhnhardt? He could never count on him. And everyone else was an enemy: Jackson, Einstein, Fischer, Porter, Capehart, Ritter, Villa, Byrd. Oh sure, they were all smart enough not to tell him point-blank, not so long as K.K.'s enthusiasm continued.

Well, dislike was at least positive, and the one thing he could not tolerate was vague relations, possibly because his own feelings were so indecisive, ambiguous: he was never certain whether he liked X or not. He needed X's love, but was incapable of loving. He could never be sincere with X, never tell him more than 50 per cent of the truth. On the other hand, it was impossible for him to permit X these same imperfections: somewhere along the line Walter was sure he'd be betrayed. He was afraid of X, terrified. Once in high school he'd plagiarized a poem, and printed it in the school magazine; he could not forget its final line, *All our acts are acts of fear*. And when his teacher caught him out, had anything ever seemed to him more unjust?

3

HE SPENT most of the early summer week-ends at Rosa Cooper's Long Island place. The house was as a rule well staffed with hearty Yale and Princeton undergraduates, which was irritating, for they were the sort of boys who, around Hartford, made green birds fly in his stomach, and seldom allowed him to meet them on their own ground. As for Rosa herself, she was a darling; everyone said so, even Walter.

But darlings are rarely serious, and Rosa was not serious about Walter. He didn't mind too much. He was able on these week-ends to make a good many contacts: Taylor Ovington, Joyce Randolph (the starlet), E. L. McEvoy, a dozen or so people whose names cast considerable glare in his address book. One evening he went with Anna Stimson to see a film featuring the Randolph girl, and before they were scarcely seated everyone for aisles around knew she was a Friend of his, knew she drank too much, was immoral, and not nearly so pretty as Hollywood made her out to be. Anna told him he was an adolescent female. "You're a man in only one respect, sweetie," she said.

It was through Rosa that he'd met Anna Stimson. An editor on a fashion magazine, she was almost six feet tall, wore black suits, affected a monocle, a walking cane, and pounds of jingling Mexican silver. She'd been married twice, once to Buck Strong, the horse-opera idol, and she had a child, a fourteen-year-old son who'd had to be put away in what she called a "corrective academy."

"He was a nasty child," she said. "He liked to take potshots out the window with a .22, and throw things, and steal from Woolworth's: awful brat, just like you."

Anna was good to him, though, and in her less depressed, less malevolent moments listened kindly while he groaned out his problems, while he explained why he was the way he was: all his life some cheat had been dealing him the wrong cards. Attributing to Anna every vice but stupidity, he liked to use her as a kind of confessor: there was nothing he could tell her of which she might legitimately disapprove. He would say: "I've told Kuhnhardt a lot of lies about Margaret; I suppose that's pretty rotten, but she would do the same for me; and anyway my idea is not for him to fire her, but maybe transfer her to the Chicago office."

Or, "I was in a bookshop, and a man was standing there and we began talking: a middle-aged man, rather nice, very intelligent. When I went outside he followed, a little ways behind: I crossed

the street, he crossed the street, I walked fast, he walked fast. This kept up six or seven blocks, and when I finally figured out what was going on I felt tickled, I felt like kidding him on. So I stopped at the corner and hailed a cab; then I turned around and gave this guy a long, long look, and he came rushing up, all smiles. And I jumped in the cab, and slammed the door and leaned out the window and laughed out loud: the look on his face, it was awful, it was like Christ. I can't forget it. And tell me, Anna, why did I do this crazy thing? It was like paying back all the people who've ever hurt me, but it was something else, too." He would tell Anna these stories, go home and go to sleep: his dreams were clear blue.

Now the problem of love concerned him, mainly because he did not consider it a problem. Nevertheless, he was conscious of being unloved: this knowledge was like an extra heart beating inside him. But there was no one. Anna, perhaps. Did Anna love him? "Oh," said Anna, "when was anything ever what it seemed to be? Now it's a tadpole, now it's a frog. It looks like gold but you put it on your finger and it leaves a green ring. Take my second husband: he looked like a nice guy, and turned out to be just another heel. Look around this very room: why, you couldn't burn incense in that fireplace, and those mirrors, they give space, they tell a lie. Nothing, Walter, is ever what it seems to be. Christmas trees are cellophane, and snow is only soap chips. Flying around inside us is something called the Soul, and when you die you're never dead; yes, and when we're alive we're never alive. And so you want to know if I love you? Don't be dumb, Walter, we're not even friends —"

4

LISTEN, the fan: turning wheels of whisper: he said you said they said we said round and round fast and slow while time recalled itself in endless chatter. Old broken fan breaking silence: August the third the third the third!

August the third, a Friday, and it was there, right in Winchell's column, his own name: "Big shot Ad exec Walter Ranney and dairy heiress Rosa Cooper are telling intimates to start buying rice." Walter himself had given the item to a friend of a friend of Winchell's. He showed it to the counter boy at the Whelan's where he ate breakfast: "That's me," he said, "I'm the guy," and the look on the boy's face was good for his digestion.

It was late when he reached the office that morning, and as he walked down the aisle of desks

a small gratifying flurry among the typists preceded him. No one said anything, however. Around eleven, after a pleasant hour of doing nothing but feel exhilarated, he went to the drugstore downstairs for a cup of coffee. Three men from the office, Jackson, Ritter, and Byrd, were there, and when Walter came in Jackson poked Byrd, and Byrd poked Ritter, and all of them turned around. "Whatcha say, big shot?" said Jackson, a pink man prematurely bald, and the other two laughed. Acting as if he hadn't heard, Walter stepped quickly into a phone booth: "Bastards," he said, pretending to dial a number. And finally, after waiting a long while for them to leave, he made a real call: "Rosa, hello, did I wake you up?"

"No."

"Say, did you see Winchell?"

"Yes."

Walter laughed. "Where do you suppose he gets that stuff?"

Silence.

"What's the matter? You sound kind of funny."

"Do I?"

"Are you mad or something?"

"Just disappointed."

"About what?"

Silence. And then: "It was a cheap thing to do, Walter, pretty cheap."

"I don't know what you mean."

"Good-bye, Walter."

On the way out he paid the cashier for a cup of coffee he'd forgotten to have. There was a barber-shop in the building. He said he wanted a shave; no — make it a haircut; no — a manicure; and suddenly, seeing himself in the mirror, where his face reflected as pale almost as the barber's bib, he knew he did not know what he wanted. Rosa had been right, he was cheap. He'd always been willing to confess his faults, for, by admitting them, it was as if he made them no longer to exist. He went back upstairs, and sat at his desk, and felt as though he were bleeding inside, and wished very much to believe in God. A pigeon strutted on the ledge outside his window. For some time he watched the shimmering sunlit feathers, the wobbly sedateness of its movements; then, before realizing it, he'd picked up and thrown a glass paperweight: the pigeon climbed calmly upward, the paperweight careened like a giant raindrop: suppose, he thought, listening for a faraway scream, suppose it hits someone, kills them? But there was nothing. Only the ticking fingers of typists, a knocking at the door: "Hey, Ranney, K.K. wants to see you."

"I'm sorry," said Mr. Kuhnhardt, doodling with

a gold pen. "And I'll write a letter for you, Walter. Any time."

Now in the elevator the enemy, all submerging with him, crushed Walter between them; Margaret was there wearing a blue hair-ribbon: she looked at him, and her face was different from other faces, not vacant as theirs were, and sterile: here still was compassion. But as she looked at him, she looked through him, too. This is my dream: he must not allow himself to believe otherwise; and yet under his own arm he carried the dream's contradiction, a manila envelope stuffed with all the personals saved from his desk. When the elevator emptied into the lobby, he knew he must speak with Margaret, ask her to forgive him, beg her protection, but she was slipping swiftly toward an exit, losing herself among the enemy: I love you, he said, running after her, I love you, he said, saying nothing.

"Margaret! Margaret!"

She turned around. The blue hair-ribbon matched her eyes, and her eyes, gazing up at him, softened, became rather friendly. Or pitying.

"Please," he said, "I thought we could have a drink together, go over to Benny's maybe. We used to like Benny's, remember?"

She shook her head. "I've got a date, and I'm late already."

"Oh."

"Yes — well I'm late," she said, and began to run. He stood watching as she raced down the street, her ribbon streaming, shining in the darkening summer light. And then she was gone.

His apartment, a one-room walk-up near Gramercy Park, needed an airing, a cleaning, but Walter, after pouring a drink, said to hell with it and stretched out on the couch. What was the use? No matter what you did or how hard you tried, it all came finally to zero; everyday everywhere everyone was being cheated, and who was there to blame? It was strange, though; lying here sipping whiskey in the dusk graying room he felt calmer than he had for God knows how long. It was like the time he'd failed algebra and felt so relieved, so free: failure was definite, a certainty, and there is always peace in certainties. Now he would leave New York, take a vacation trip; he had a few hundred dollars, enough to last until fall.

And, wondering where he should go, he all at once saw, as if a film had commenced running in his head, silk caps, cherry-colored and lemon, and little wise-faced men wearing exquisite polka-dot shirts: closing his eyes he was suddenly five years old, and it was delicious remembering the cheers, the hot dogs, his father's big pair of binoculars.

Saratoga! Shadows masked his face in the sinking light. He turned on a lamp, fixed another drink, put a rumba record on the phonograph, and began to dance, the soles of his shoes whispering on the carpet: he'd often thought that with a little training he could've been a professional.

Just as the music ended, the telephone rang. He simply stood there, afraid somehow to answer, and the lamplight, the furniture, everything in the room went quite dead. When at last he thought it had stopped, it commenced again; louder, it seemed, and more insistent. He tripped over a footstool, picked up the receiver, dropped and recovered it, said: "Yes?"

Long-distance: a call from some town in Pennsylvania, the name of which he didn't catch. Following a series of spasmodic rattlings, a voice, dry and sexless and altogether unlike any he'd ever heard before, came through: "Hello, Walter."

"Who is this?"

No answer from the other end, only a sound of strong orderly breathing; the connection was so good it seemed as though whoever it was was standing beside him with lips pressed against his ear. "I don't like jokes: who is this?"

"Oh you know me, Walter. You've known me a long time." A click, and nothing.

5

IT WAS night and raining when the train reached Saratoga. He'd slept most of the trip, sweating in the hot dampness of the car, and dreamed of an old castle where only old turkeys lived, and dreamed a dream involving his father, Kurt Kuhnhardt, someone no-faced, Margaret and Rosa, Anna Stimson, and a queer fat lady with diamond eyes. He was standing on a long, deserted street; except for an approaching procession of slow, black, funeral-like cars there was no sign of life. Still, he knew, eyes unseen observed his nakedness from every window, and he hailed frantically the first of the limousines; it stopped and a man, his father, invitingly held open the door: Daddy, he yelled, running forward, and the door slammed shut, mashing off his fingers, and his father, with a great belly-laugh, leaned out the window to toss an enormous wreath of roses. In the second car was Margaret, in the third the lady with the diamond eyes (wasn't this Miss Casey, his old algebra teacher?), in the fourth Mr. Kuhnhardt and a new protégé, the no-faced creature. Each door opened, each closed, all laughed, all threw roses. The procession rolled smoothly away down the silent street.

And with a terrible scream Walter fell among the mountain of roses: thorns tore wounds, and a sudden rain, a gray cloudburst, shattered the blooms, and washed pale blood bleeding over the leaves.

By the fixed stare of a woman sitting opposite he realized at once he'd yelled aloud in his sleep. He smiled at her sheepishly, and she looked away with, he imagined, some embarrassment. She was a cripple; on her left foot she wore a giant shoe. Later, in the Saratoga station, he helped with her luggage, and they shared a taxi; there was no conversation: each sat in his corner looking at the rain, the blurred lights. In New York a few hours before he'd withdrawn from the bank all his savings, locked the door of his apartment, and left no messages; furthermore, there was in this town not a soul who knew him: it was a good feeling.

The hotel was filled: not to mention the racing crowd, there was, the desk clerk told him, a medical convention: no, sorry, he didn't know of a room anywhere. Maybe tomorrow.

So Walter found the bar. As long as he was going to stay up all night he might as well do it drunk. The bar, very large, very hot and noisy, was brilliant with summer-season grotesques: sagging silver-fox ladies, and little stunted jockeys, and pale loud-voiced men wearing cheap fantastic checks. After a couple of drinks, though, the noise seemed faraway. Then, glancing around, he saw the cripple. She was alone at a table where she sat primly sipping crème de menthe. They exchanged a smile. Rising, Walter went to join her. "It's not like we were strangers," she said, as he sat down. "Here for the races, I suppose?"

"No," he said, "just a rest. And you?"

She pursed her lips. "Maybe you noticed I've got a clubfoot; oh sure now, don't look surprised: you noticed, everybody does. Well, see," she said, twisting the straw in her glass, "see, my doctor's going to give a talk at this convention, going to talk about me and my foot on account of I'm pretty special. Gee, I'm scared. I mean I'm going to have to show off my foot."

Walter said he was sorry, and she said oh there was nothing to be sorry about; after all, she was getting a little vacation out of it, wasn't she? "And I haven't been out of the city in six years. It was six years ago I spent a week at the Bear Mountain Inn." Her cheeks were red, rather mottled, and her eyes, set too closely together, were lavender-colored, intense: they seemed never to blink. She wore a gold band on her wedding finger; play-acting, to be sure: it would not have fooled anybody.

"I'm a domestic," she said, answering a ques-

tion. "And there's nothing wrong with that: it's honest and I like it. The people I work for have the cutest kid, Ronnie. I'm better to him than his mother, and he loves me more: he's told me so. That one, she stays drunk all the time."

It was depressing to listen to, but Walter, afraid suddenly to be alone, stayed and drank and talked in the way he'd once talked to Anna Stimson. Shh! she said at one point, for his voice had risen too high, and a good many people were staring. Walter said the hell with them, he didn't care; it was as if his brain were made of glass, and all the whiskey he'd drunk had turned into a hammer; he could feel the shattered pieces rattling in his head, distorting focus, falsifying shape; the cripple, for instance, seemed not one person, but several: Irving, his mother, a man named Bonaparte, Margaret, all those and others: more and more he came to understand experience is a circle of which no moment can be isolated, forgotten.

6

THE bar was closing. They went Dutch on the check and, while waiting for change, neither spoke. Watching him with her unblinking lavender eyes, she seemed quite controlled, but there was going on inside, he could tell, some subtle agitation. When the waiter returned they divided the change, and she said: "If you want to, you can come to my room." A rash-like blush covered her face. "I mean, you said you didn't have any place to sleep—" Walter reached out and took her hand: the smile she gave him was touchingly shy.

Reeking with dime-store perfume, she came out of the bathroom wearing only a sleazy flesh-colored kimono, and the monstrous black shoe. It was then that he realized he could never go through with it. And he'd never felt so sorry for himself: not even Anna Stimson would ever have forgiven him this. "Don't look," she said, and there was a trembling in her voice, "I'm funny about anybody seeing my foot."

He turned to the window, where pressing elm leaves rustled in the rain, and lightning, too far off for sound, winked whitely. "All right," she said. Walter did not move.

"All right," she repeated anxiously. "Shall I put out the light? I mean, maybe you like to get ready—in the dark."

He came to the edge of the bed, and, bending down, kissed her cheek. "I think you're so very sweet, but —"

The telephone interrupted. She looked at him

dumbly. "Jesus God," she said, and covered the mouthpiece with her hand, "it's long-distance! I'll bet it's about Ronnie! I'll bet he's sick, or—hello—what?—Ranney? Gee, no. You've got the wrong —"

"Wait," said Walter, taking the receiver. "This is me, this is Walter Ranney."

"Hello, Walter."

The voice, dull and sexless and remote, went straight to the pit of his stomach. The room seemed to seesaw, to buckle. A mustache of sweat sprouted on his upper lip. "Who is this?" he said so slowly the words did not connect coherently.

"Oh you know me, Walter. You've known me a long time." Then silence: whoever it was had hung up.

"Gee," said the woman, "now how do you suppose they knew you were in my room; I mean—say, was it bad news? You look kind of —"

Walter fell across her, clutching her to him, pressing his wet cheek against hers. "Hold me," he said, discovering he could still cry. "Hold me, please."

"Poor little boy," she said, patting his back. "My poor little boy: we're awfully alone in this world, aren't we?" And presently he went to sleep in her arms.

But he had not slept since, nor could he now, not even listening to the lazy lull of the fan; in its turning he could hear train wheels: Saratoga to New York, New York to New Orleans. And New Orleans he'd chosen for no special reason, except that it was a town of strangers, and a long way off. Four spinning fan blades, wheels and voices, round and round; and after all, as he saw it now, there was to this network of malice no ending, none whatever.

Water flushed down wall pipes, steps passed overhead, keys jangled in the hall, a news commentator rumbled somewhere beyond, next door a little girl said why? Why? WHY? Yet in the room there was a sense of silence. His feet shining in the transom-light looked like amputated stone: the gleaming toenails were ten small mirrors, all reflecting greenly. Sitting up, he rubbed sweat off with a towel; now more than anything the heat frightened him, for it made him know tangibly his own helplessness. He threw the towel across the room, where, landing on a lampshade, it swung back and forth. At this moment the telephone rang. And rang. And it was ringing so loud he was sure all the hotel could hear. An army would be pounding at his door. So he pushed his face into the pillow, covered his ears with his hands, and thought: think of nothing things, think of wind.

SHOULD A BIOGRAPHER TELL?

by WILFRED PARTINGTON

1

AT ONE of their earliest suppers at The Mitre Tavern in Fleet Street, Dr. Johnson told young Boswell that the biographical part of Literature was what he loved most. It is so with most of us. Even to fiction readers there often comes at some point in a novel, if it is written with the art of a Hardy, or a Dickens, or a Sinclair Lewis, or a Conrad, the impression that some character or other is real. In other words, they are reading the story as if it were biography — as not infrequently it is. We are rather less interested in the things done than in their doers and the forces that urged them; for therein lie the keys to the future undoing and reshaping. This is what Emerson meant when he affirmed

“There is properly no history, only biography.”

The real historians then are our biographers, autobiographers, and diarists. Their art is old enough by now, it might be thought, to ensure a general acceptance of and adherence to the Johnsonian precept that “if a man is to write *A Panegyrick* he may keep vices out of sight; but if he proposes to write *A Life*, he must represent it as it really was.” Yet with all the lessons they have had that Truth will out at last and that the researcher eventually elucidates Mystery and exposes the False, how often do biographers fail to represent a *Life* as it really was!

True, there are a few biographies which have engraved in Literature for all time vivid portraits of grand men — biographies like Lockhart’s of Sir Walter Scott, and Forster’s of Charles Dickens. But Lockhart in his classic played the devil’s tricks

with correspondence (as I have seen in re-handling the originals); and in order to toady to wealthy publisher Robert Cadell, he savagely and unjustly mauled Sir Walter’s friend James Ballantyne, his “dear Tom Tell-Truth.” And both Lockhart and Forster were unfortunately reticent to the point of being misleading about certain phases in the lives of their heroes, including those matrimonial. It was Forster, too, who had the lamentable habit of cutting up Dickens’s letters to paste pieces into his MS. narrative — thus losing entirely the script on the back. The result, however unintentional, was to destroy the original evidence of whole letters.

Considering the variety and brilliance of subjects, it is strange that so few impressive and satisfying *Lives* have been added to English-written literature. One opportunity was missed with the authoritative biographizing of Charles Kingsley, who was worthy of a biography as vigorous and full-blooded as himself. Instead the writing and editing of his Memoir and Letters was left to the object of his devotion. Good wives ought to be prohibited from perpetrating bad biographies and incurring literary damnation. Woman is revealing only to her beloved or about her rival. Fanny Kingsley had difficulties apart from those inherent to the feminine psychology. I learned of them when her large and lavendered bandbox full of personal documents came into my possession. As I saw how the manuscript of her work had been submitted to Very Important People for this one to prune and that one to puff out, and how her own emasculating and suppressing had taken so much character out of her husband’s papers, it was obvious why those two volumes seemed like a stuffed *Life* on two legs. If her ardent lover-husband anticipated the Fleshly School of Poetry in unprinted love-lyrics fit to make Swinburne and Rossetti shout with joy, that was Fanny’s dear secret. It was not for biography — certainly not for a biography by the Rector’s widow writing within the shadows of Queen Victo-

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ria's ample petticoats and the episcopal aprons of the Church of England. Good Heavens, No!

There is one grave circumstance that has for years increasingly tended to restrict biography both as historical record and as an ethical instrument — the latter a function which seems generally unappreciated. This is the present clamping effect of the libel laws in America and Britain on writers whose duty it is to deal with delicate matters where people concerned are still living. For example, the truth is just as likely as an untruth to constitute an actionable libel. And satire, which in sturdier conditions was so often the most effective corrector, has been robbed of its one vital force: for it is now punishable, by involvement in costly legal proceedings, if used (however deservedly) to hold up a person or thing to ridicule that is damaging.

Among modern biographers there is a growing tendency to keep the picture pretty at all costs: to leave unpleasant facts alone. It is safer and easier nowadays to whitewash than portray faithfully. Perhaps those who bow to the modern forces of corruption and regimentation, working hand in hand, stifle their consciences by the hopeful philosophizing that as the evil man does lives after him why should they worry? But, if Truth is suppressed, then Evil not merely goes unchecked but is encouraged. The success of rascality and unscrupulousness lies not in their profit immediately, but in their being kept dark ultimately.

On the hypothesis, therefore, that present-day criticism in general, and biography in particular, are — by a combination of corruptive influences — failing to do their job honestly and with proper regard for the higher purpose of Literature, I come to a remarkable instance of this failure in the all-important department of National Biography. For this is a department which, concerned only with historical fact and under obligation to observe judicial detachment and impartiality, might be considered impervious to the restrictive and subversive circumstances which have been indicated.

2

IN the eighteen-forties there flourished in the City of London, then waxing fat with wealth from sweated labour, one Thomas Chapman, senior proprietor in the firm of John Chapman & Company, merchants of 2 Leadenhall Street. He also held the high position of Chairman of Lloyds Register of Shipping: so that for power and affluence his business house could truly be described by the term, which has long been a world-wide criterion of ex-

cellence, "A 1. at Lloyds." On the 28th of June 1846 Charles Dickens wrote to his confidant John Forster exultantly announcing that yesterday he

"BEGAN DOMBEY!"

The relationship of these two contemporaneous circumstances lies in the identification of Thomas Chapman as the original of Paul Dombey senior, the central figure of Dickens's immediately successful novel.

But Forster, who in the hey-day of Dickens's friendship with Chapman was taken to dine at the proud merchant's house, would have none of the identification; and he quoted Dickens (although not in support of his contention) as having said that the man for Dombey, if Hablot K. Browne the illustrator could see him, was "Sir A — E — of D — s." But this may have been a suggestion to throw the artist off the scent, or to prevent him from making a literal delineation of the real original. Edwin Pugh, that worthy Dickensian who in 1912 listed all (save one) of the identifiable Dickens originals, unhesitatingly adopted the Chapman prototype for Dombey senior, and made fun of the too Podsnappish disclaimer by Forster.

In the counting-house of Chapman and Co. was employed Charles Dickens's youngest brother, Augustus, engaged in 1844; and also a remarkable character named Thomas Powell, then aged thirty-five. Augustus, on leaving school, was comfortably installed with the merchant by the influence of his big and popular brother, who assured Chapman that he had no reason to suppose the youth was "addicted to authorship, or had any bad habits of that nature." Charles's nickname for Augustus was "Moses": which, facetiously pronounced "Boses," became "Boz;" and so was immortalized in the title of Dickens's first work *Sketches by Boz*. Another nickname given by Charles to his brother was "Shrimp." Augustus, however, did not find the merchant's counting-house very comfortable for long. After a few years he crossed the Atlantic to the Land of Promise, where no doubt he was flattered and spoiled by the American adorers of brother Charles, and where certainly he died in comparative obscurity.

But, unlike Shrimp, Thomas Powell, who was a married man with a family of conventional Victorian size, *was* addicted to the habit of authorship — not to speak of graver ones for the moment. He wrote second-class poetry with some facility, and better class prose with more success: also, he was a playwright. Becoming friendly with Wordsworth, he produced in collaboration with him, Leigh Hunt, R. H. Horne, and others, a modernized edition of

Chaucer. He is stated by Kitton (in his work *Charles Dickens*, 1902) to have had "a trick of becoming very confidential on small or no provocation, and possessed a perfect mania for writing letters, even to persons in the same room."

These idiosyncrasies were presumably partial basis for the report, first quoted by Kitton, that Powell — as well as Dickens's father — contributed to the character of Mr. Micawber: an identification accepted and adopted by Pugh. Powell's literary activities, as a relief from his responsible duties in Chapman's office, were expensive rather than lucrative. But he appeared to the world to be a man of independent means: he entertained lavishly. Well-fed guests can be cheap and useful publicity agents.

Among the authors he got in with, naturally, was the creator of *Pickwick*, whose regard for the agreeable dilettante can be estimated by the following extract from a typically high-spirited letter: —

Devonshire Terrace,
Sixteenth April, 1844.

MY DEAR POWELL, — Lord bless you! Thursday or Friday!!! Why, I composed (though I say it as shouldn't) the best little party you can imagine; comprehending everybody I had room for, whom I thought Mr. Chapman would like to know. Let me see. Rogers for Poetry, Sydney Smith for Orthodoxy, Charles Kemble and Young for Theatricality, Lord Denman for Benchity, Lord Dudley Stuart for Polarity, Mr. & Mrs. Milner Gibson for Anti Corn Law Leagueability, Mrs. Norton for beauty, and divers other for variety. Lord love you! Why at this time of the year it couldn't be done again under three weeks. Not to mention the Dwarf, general Tom Thumb, whom on the word of a spiritiwal creetur, I had summoned, and have summoned, for the Evening in question. No. We won't come down with the run. We'll have a long notice, and see what can be done with the second ventur. When we doos go in, we plays to win, Sir.

Says Shrimp to me (I allude to the humble individual who has the honor to be my brother). "Mr. Powell is coming up one evening". — "Shrimp," said I. "Why evening? We dine at half-past 5. Cannot said Powell, with a day's notice (to ensure my not being out) come up to dinner?" I saw that I had touched him; and had a modest confidence in my message reaching you safely. Whether Shrimp broke down, or Prawn (otherwise Powell) I don't know. . . .

3

WHEN a novelist or a dramatist takes a prototype from life for one of his characters the degree of faithfulness in the subsequent portraiture depends upon the individual writer's art and the particular requirement of his work as a whole. Novelists like Honoré de Balzac, Thomas Hardy, and Joseph

Conrad, were psychological analysts who tended to work closely to their models, or their conceptions of them, in order to obtain fidelity to life. Charles Dickens arrived at the same end by different methods, taking this or that physical or mental idiosyncrasy from his originals and exaggerating it in the manner of a caricaturist.

Thus, for example, while the chief proprietor of Chapman and Company no doubt inspired the character of Mr. Dombey, in the result the head of Dombey and Son became a caricature of Mr. Chapman. This is borne out by the facts as we know them and also by the few letters from Dickens to the merchant of Leadenhall Street. Dombey, with his single-track mind, with the firm of Dombey and Son as the Alpha and Omega of existence, would not have had either time or inclination for the arts, which meant nothing to his ledgers. He would have felt himself above those rather irregular and financially unsound persons who wrote high-falutin stuff, or painted scandalous pictures of men out of their shirts and women out of their chemises, or mimicked on the stage — amusing as they might sometimes be. With Thomas Chapman, when away from his counting-house, the reverse was the case; and in this respect at least he as the original differed from and was superior to the character in the book.

The first recorded association of the novelist with the real-life merchant is in 1836 — an engagement to dine with him; and later the same year "We are just going to Chapman's sister's quadrille party." The few letters that Dickens subsequently wrote to him are mainly concerned with such mutually agreeable social amenities, one to do with a play performance. They evince the cordiality, mingled with respect, in which he held the magnate.

Chapman was obviously proud of employing in the "House" a brother of England's most popular author, and also the trusted young man Thomas Powell — who, when away from his responsible duties with the merchant's finances, hob-nobbed with Wordsworth, Dickens, Leigh Hunt, the Brownings, and other lights. This was contact with the great, brought about by the influence of the great House. The thought was highly satisfying to its head.

Then one awful day in the year 1846 the bladder of Mr. Chapman's pride and complacency was pricked — just as Mr. Dombey's was when Fate dared to take away his son Paul, heir to the Firm of Dombey and Son. But Thomas Powell only took from the original firm some 50,000 dollars. The amount has never been authoritatively stated: Chapman and Co. in a certified testimony spoke of his "series of frauds, effected both by *forgery* and

peculation, to a large amount;" and Dickens mentioned "thousands of pounds."

The details of the affair are scanty apart from the dramatic accounts written at the time by Dickens and now to be given here. It is sufficient for the moment to say that apparently out of consideration for Powell's wife and family, and most probably also having regard to his distinguished literary connexions, the forger was not prosecuted by his employers, who were content to dismiss him summarily. The amount would be written off in the year's balance-sheet, which was perhaps endorsed with a new rule: "No more literary geniuses or relatives of literary geniuses to be employed here." Certainly Mr. Dombey would have so ordained, had he been as indiscreet as his prototype.

Dickens when he heard the sensational news was in Switzerland; he at once wrote, 3rd July 1846, the following letter to Chapman, the tenor of which it is important to remember in view of the sequel:—

MY DEAR SIR, — It was a very considerate and friendly act for you to time your communication on the most painful subject of the breach of confidence in your house, as you did, and to make it to me yourself. Accept my thanks for this proof of your regard among many others, and with this, the assurance of my friendship and esteem.

I have been perfectly horrified by the whole story. I could hardly name a man in London whom I should have thought less likely to stand so committed, than he. Not that I had any intimate knowledge of his pursuits, or any close acquaintance with himself, or with his usual mode of thinking and proceeding — but I had an idea of his great steadiness and reliability, and a conviction of his great respect and regard for you. God help him. I believe even now, that he was sincere in the latter feeling, and was overcome and swept away by the tide of circumstances on which he had madly cast himself. The more I hear and see of such surprises, the more I echo that clause in Christ's prayer in which they are all shadowed forth, and shrink from the prospect of temptation being presented to anybody dear to me, or to myself.

It has often awakened great wonder within me how all those publishing expenses (of the extent of which, I am able to form a pretty accurate idea) were defrayed. But whenever I have sounded Augustus on the subject; which I have done once or twice, he always hinted at a rich uncle, and some unknown share in some unknown business, which of course I could not gainsay. He told the tale as it was told to him, and had every reason to believe it. Indeed I suppose you and your partners laboured under the like delusion?

I should be very glad if you would tell me, when it is all done, whether you have any intelligence of him, or any knowledge of his destiny. It is terrible to think of his wife and children. . . .

It is necessary to keep in mind that at the date of this letter the novelist, so far removed from the City

of London, was writing the opening chapters of *Dombey and Son* and building up its central character on Thomas Chapman. There are two predominant features in the letter: firstly, the absence in it of any particular expression of sympathy with the House in its heavy financial loss; and secondly, the extenuatory, almost sympathetic, nature of Dickens's references to Powell.

The course of the forger's destiny during the remainder of 1846 and the next two years is obscure. It is most likely that he lay low for this period — hoping that the scandal would be forgotten as it had been forgiven, and waiting with Mr. Micawber's philosophy for something to turn up.

Sure enough, in the last few weeks of 1848 something did turn up. But it was something most unpleasant: a warrant issued by the Croydon magistrates for Powell's arrest in connexion with further alleged forgeries. By a conspiracy which temporarily gave him refuge in a private lunatic asylum, Powell eluded the clutches of a Police Inspector Shaw. For the second time he escaped the justice of the law. And in the Spring of 1849, as George Barrington the Prince of Pick-pockets had done in 1791, he "left his country for his country's good." He landed in America.

4.

THE self-imposed incarceration in Miles's Lunatic Asylum at Hoxton, and the succeeding voyage across the Atlantic, seem not only to have induced a new vigour and self-confidence in Thomas Powell but to have inspired some ambitious plans — including the highly desirable one of beginning on a clean leaf of his life's record. After reaching New York he bustled about, and was soon among its newspaper editors. This was not difficult. Did he not come from England as a man of letters with published poems and plays to show? Had he not really fine credentials in the shape of letters and presentation books to him from the great authors of the old country? It was all very impressive; and so was Mr. Powell in person. The busy editors had no reason to look twice at some of those letters and book-inscriptions. Why should they doubt, even had there been similar material at hand for comparison?

Moreover, the dear fellow was doubly welcome to those New York editors already beginning to set the pace for the World's journalism. For he came with topical copy in his capacious pockets — personalia about Popular Persons in the form of short *Lives* of darling Dickens, Lord Galahad Tennyson,

those romantic elopers the Brownings, the caustic Carlyle, and others. Hot stuff, too! The "dear fellow"? Yes, truly a likeable man. His more or less "official" American biographer does not fail to give a snapshot picture of him, whatever else he omits. Here is the picture: it is sufficient to explain the success among the New Yorkers of the Old Englander:

. . . He found time from his work, however, for hours of congenial companionship, and for conversation upon many subjects to which his friends never wearied of listening. In personal appearance he was the conventional bluff, hearty, and bulky Englishman of the John Bull type, and he retained his national characteristics through all the years of his association with Americans, living in the memories of his friends and associates as one of the liveliest and best-liked of the coterie of New York journalists and literary men that assembled regularly at the famous Pfaff's. . . . [*Dictionary of American Biography*, 1935.]

But Powell early blotted his new leaf in New York. After two-and-a-half years of retreat and asylum from the scenes of his London triumphs, and after the expense of his emigration, he was naturally low in funds; and he had resort again to his ingenuity with the pen. He forged a letter of credit for £250 on a Quebec firm in the name of Mr. John Allan, a partner in Chapman and Co., his former employers who had forgiven his enormities. This credit was negotiated through a Mr. J. G. Body of New York; who, on the strength of the great London House's name, promptly advanced the cash. The fraud was soon discovered (about July 1849). Powell was taken before the New York "police;" but, as proper evidence that the letter of credit was a forgery could not there and then be produced, he was discharged. The evidence of the forgery was later supplied by Chapman and Co. in a Declaration: the document from which this summary of events is taken does not, however, carry the legal proceedings further. Perhaps they were dropped.

Whether they were not reported in the New York Press and remained unknown to its editors, or alternatively whether they were explained away by the bluff, hearty John Bull, the facts are that he continued to be accepted at his own generous valuation. The *New York Tribune* and its associate *New York Evening Post* gave him laudatory notices, the latter beginning the publication of his biographical and critical sketch of Charles Dickens. It was one of thirty-eight such sketches in Powell's first American book, then printing, that was to be issued the same year under the title *The Living Authors of England* (1849) and republished in Britain in 1851 with some of the minor subjects omitted. And with the serialisation in the *New York Evening Post*,

which quickly reached Dickens, were laid charges of a highly explosive nature.

Powell's sketch of Dickens is of some importance because it is written from first-hand knowledge and also because it contains early and contemporary criticisms which later were to be applied to the novelist, even by admirers of his work. Some of the critic's literary estimates lose their effect by their antithesis: as when he compares his subject with Thackeray who "never loses his temper or his judgment, Dickens often does." Powell's judgment of his man may be summed up in the comment: "If this estimate be correct, it necessarily places the author of *Pickwick* in the second class of literature."

But the sketch is most interesting, and to an extent valuable, when it engraves a portrait of "our distinguished countryman." We are shown Mr. Dickens "in private life" as good-tempered and hospitable. His eye "is hazel" (a subject on which there has been much controversy). He is "a very gay dresser," and "as fond of rings and gold chains as a Mosaic Jew . . . and is reported to live not too wisely, but too well." An amusing story retailed from Dickens's dinner-table is followed by these biting strokes of the graver: "Notwithstanding his apparent theoretical sympathy with the lower classes, he pays an absurd deference to men of rank, and thinks no dinner-table complete without a lord, or a very rich merchant or banker. This has been decidedly injurious to his writings; it has cramped his hand and 'checked the thunder in mid-volley'."

It is, however, more especially my next and final selection from Powell's sketch which is remarkable, and which caused explosions on both sides of the Atlantic. As we have seen, Dickens was beginning *Dombey and Son* in 1846 when he heard from Thomas Chapman of Powell's first frauds on the House. The publication of the novel in the usual monthly parts began in October of the same year, and ended in April 1848. They came in the nick of time for Powell to notice that the hero of Mr. Dickens's last novel "is well-known as intended to represent a shipowner and merchant 'not a hundred miles' from Leadenhall Street, in whose office a relative of the novelist is clerk." Then this follows:—

. . . When the first number appeared the likeness was readily recognized by this wealthy merchant's relatives, and he was christened Dombey on the spot, and he himself was not averse to the "high distinction of being the hero of a work by so popular a writer as Mr. Dickens;" we ourselves have seen him blandly smile as the allusion has been made in his hearing; but as the work proceeded, and the heartless mercenary character of a London merchant was un-

folded, his face grew tragically dismal at the slightest reference to what had formerly fed his pride!

. . . We cannot help in this place remarking, that when Mr. Dickens commenced "Dombey" he stated to several that, in his new work, it was his intention to expose the arrogance and pride of every English merchant, with an eye to the correction of those notorious vices. It is evident to all that he either lacked the courage or the power to achieve so great and praiseworthy an object. It has resulted in the miserable failure of grossly libelling and caricaturing one person, and thus narrowing a great public object to a private end. Had the castigator of the Yorkshire schoolmasters, the paid magistrates, the impostor architects, the dandy milliners, and the grinding usurers, possessed the nerve to teach the arrogant merchants of London that their clerks and dependents were worthy better treatment than they receive at the hands of their Egyptian taskmasters, Mr. Dickens might have secured a fame which is fast fading away under his new dispensation of writing; but this narrowing of an originally fine and broad-viewed mind will always happen when an author deserts the manly code of his early years, and transforms himself into the companion of fashionable dandies, literary lords [*] and heartless millionaires.

5

WHAT with "Mr. Dickens's" novel and now this man Powell's terrible identification of its chief character, the pride of Thomas Chapman must have been finally humbled almost as abjectly as was Dombey's when his beautiful and haughty wife eloped with the reptilian Carker — ran away from HIM, the head of Dombey and Son. That earlier matter of the frauds had been hushed up: the loss written off silently, however bitterly. But these awful revelations were now for the world and his wife to read and laugh over.

In the Dickens menage at Devonshire Terrace, itself beginning to grow uncomfortable, the Powell gunpowder exploded with more violent effects; for it blew up not only the novelist's complacency but also his rather sympathetic attitude to the forger. It was bad enough to have it bruited about in Britain (where the Lord God of Snobbery kinged it alongside Queen Victoria) that he Dickens, the champion of the poor and oppressed, pandered to men of title and wealth. But that he should be branded a snob over there — there in the new Republic of Equality (more or less) — where his writings were getting so popular, was intolerable. Also, there was that awkward identification of his influential friend Chapman with Dombey, and its pendent charge of faithlessness of declared prin-

* [A reference to Dickens's partiality for that peculiar person Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton.]

ciples. These Powellizings got under Dickens's skin, which was not so tough as his muscles. He also would do some exploding. To parody his own playful boast to Powell, it was a case of "when we doos fight, we fights for the K.O., Sir." And from the moment Powell's biographical broadside was poured into London, Dickens determined on the K.O. — to knock Thomas Powell out of American society. *The Battle of Life* (new version) was on.

The novelist threw himself into the battle furiously and with all his energy. The course he decided on was a campaign to denounce Powell and expose his forgeries: or at least those Dickens knew of; for the more interesting ones — the literary frauds — were then unknown. He began with a letter (20th October 1849) to Chapman, "My dear Sir," saying that as a cheap edition of *American Notes* was just in preparation

. . . I hope you will see no objection to my instancing in a new Preface this fellow's connexion with an American newspaper as a striking proof of the justice of the estimation in which I hold that Press, and to my setting forth his history in the plainest possible terms. I think such an unmitigated villain should be denounced, and I know that it would go all over the States instantly. . . .

But *American Notes* came out without any such history of the villain in its new preface. In the absence of Chapman's reply, the inescapable inference is that he disapproved of the suggestion — a decision in keeping with his attitude throughout. It may or may not be significant that, so far as is known, Dickens's correspondence with Chapman practically ceased with this letter.

Dickens was not to be baulked. What he was deterred (immediately, that is) from doing in print, he did in script: writing to American correspondents to describe in forthright terms Powell's career, and suggesting the dissemination of the details. At least two editors of English newspapers were in likewise circularized. Of the letters to America, one is that to L. Gaylord Clark — firstly, because it has never been printed in any collection of Dickens's correspondence (not even in the Nonsuch Edition of 1937-8); and secondly, to amplify the story already outlined: —

. . . But I have another piece of news for you — I am going to give you a serious caution, respecting a man who has been, and possibly may yet be in New York and who I think may likely to have fallen in your way. I learn from a brother of mine, that one of your newspapers (I think it is called "The New York Evening Post") has been PUFFING a Mr. Thomas Powell, an English literary gentleman, and publishing a life of me by that eminent individual purporting to be a part of some forthcoming book.

which is from beginning to end, one intact and complete lie. I think Mr. Powell a very likely man indeed to form a ready connection with the American Press. He is a forger and a thief. He was managing clerk to an eminent merchant's house in the City of London, and during a series of years forged and altered checks until he had defrauded them to the extent of thousands of pounds.

His robberies being discovered one day, he took up his hat, went to a chemist, bought some laudanum, walked off to a warm bath and was found in it insensible. I don't know whether he took enough laudanum to kill himself but I should say he was careful to keep on the safe side — he was recovered and forgiven by the gentleman whom he had robbed — dismissed of course but not prosecuted. They were tender of his wife and family. After some months' endurance of the misery and shame of his position, he was taken up at Croydon (ten miles from London) for passing several forged checks to divers tradespeople in that neighbourhood; was stated to the magistrate to be mad; and was actually confined for some time in a lunatic asylum that the prosecution against him might not go on.

From the lunatic asylum he found his way to New York. He arrived there with a forged letter of recommendation to credit purporting to come from a partner in the very house he had robbed and drew two bills upon that gentleman (cashed in New York) which of course has been protested and returned. The very same house, to whose moderation he is indebted for not working in chains in Norfolk Island at [?this] instant, is of course the subject of his blackest ingratitude and is libelled in all sorts of ways in his aforesaid life of me.

Before his character was discovered he wrote some plays — one dedicated to me — by pushing which he got into the houses of certain literary men, and among others into mine, where he once dined, I am sorry to say. I know his late employers well, and tell you this story with the full and complete personal knowledge of its truth in every particular. Indeed, it is under-stated. You are at liberty to make any use of this communication that you think proper. I am responsible for its truth and think your American readers will do well to consider whom they trust to sometimes.

Ever, my dear Clark, faithfully yours,

CHARLES DICKENS.

Devonshire Terrace, Oct. 22. 1849.

When the above letter appeared in the *New York Tribune* Powell rose on his massive legs and fought back hard. First, he put the gentleman who published Dickens's letter into prison, as its writer plaintively informed Alexander Ireland (24. Dec. 1849). Next, he began proceedings against Dickens for libel, claiming 10,000 dollars.

The unfortunate journalist to be imprisoned was perhaps Gaylord Clark himself: his identity does not emerge from the dossier before me. But when the staggering news reached London, and later there came a letter of advice from "one of the first lawyers

in New York" telling Dickens what he *must* do and do quickly, the novelist acted with speed and resolution to save the horrid situation. The Battle of Life had become a Battle of Liberty. What would they say of him in the States when it became known that an innocent American citizen had been thrown into prison on account of Charles Dickens. And in the result he produced what book-collectors, bibliographers, and rare-book dealers, have not realized all these years is the rarest of Dickens's first editions.

What, of course, was wanted, both to release the imprisoned victim and to counter the threat of a libel action was Proof — testimony in some quickly-sendable and legally-acceptable form that would substantiate the public denunciation of Powell; for it must be remembered that no judicial proceedings had decided his guilt, however provable it may have been. Dickens's first step was to write to Chapman and Co. the following letter which also has never appeared in any collection of his correspondence: —

Devonshire Terrace,
Thursday 13th December, 1849.

DEAR SIRS,

I beg to call your attention to the accompanying extract cut from an American newspaper called the "New York Tribune," in which, in a letter to Mr. Clark of New York, I describe Mr. Thomas Powell as "a Forger and a Thief;" and I entreat the favour of your informing me whether he was employed in your house many years, and whether you detected him at last, in any proceedings which justify that description.

I also beg you to state to me, if you can, when certain criminal charges were preferred against him before the Magistrates at Croydon.

Dear Sir, Faithfully yours,

CHARLES DICKENS.

The House duly supplied the required Declaration, affirming *inter alia* the description as "too painfully true." Our novelist-turned-attorney also wrote for a statement from Dr. Southwood Smith (famed for his sanitary reforms) who had obligingly assisted to find Powell asylum from the hands of the police. The naïveté of the doctor's certificate was equalled by Powell's when, including the doctor in *The Living Authors of England*, he said: "His good offices are always at the disposal of his friends."

Dickens next added to his indictment a report from *The Times* of 10 January 1849 of the medical legal manœuvres by which Powell avoided appearing before the magistrates; who were highly incredulous, declaring that they were not satisfied the defendant's condition was "occasioned by the act of God;" but that by the use of opium and other means he had brought on his present condition to evade justice. This Dickensian indictment con-

cluded with the correspondence between Chapman & Co. and J. G. Body uncovering Powell's fraud in New York.

6

THESE documents Dickens rushed to his printers, who type-set them over the household words of their imprint "Bradbury and Evans" in a large quarto pamphlet of four fully-covered pages. It had no title-page, but bore at the head of P. [1] —

(PROOF.)

[PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.]

Concerning this pamphlet, a not unimportant digression from the story ought to be made. The printing was recorded by John C. Eckel of Philadelphia in his *Dickens Bibliography* (1913). The copy he described, with inadequate appreciation of its status, came from the library of Harry B. Smith the American book-collector. It was one Dickens had sent to editor Charles Kent of the London newspaper *The Sun* with a covering letter which spoke of it as "a Proof I have had privately printed." The bibliographer, after hazarding that it was the only copy known, added "which leads to the supposition that it was the only copy printed" — a conclusion slightly qualified to "it may have been the only copy printed" in his 1932 edition.

This supposition is fantastic. Ignoring the implication in the covering letter, Eckel seems to have been misled by the wording at the head of the pamphlet and to have considered the printing as a solitary proof or printer's pull. But disregarding the odd and meaningless brackets (which are probably a compositor's error in the haste with which the job was done) the word *Proof* is Dickens's title for the printing — meaning *Proof of Thomas Powell's Forgeries*, or some such wording. For in these four large close-printed pages was in truth substantiation of the charges: and the facts here marshalled show beyond question that there was actually an edition privately printed mainly for America to meet the two crises there. Dickens himself said so in the covering letter to Kent that should be read in conjunction with the one to Alexander Ireland, editor of the *Manchester Examiner*, above mentioned. His words to the latter, after referring to the denunciation in New York, are ". . . having but one day before the sailing of the last steamer to collect the proofs printed on the accompanying sheet [i.e. the pamphlet folded after printing to make four pages]. . . . I got them together in short time, and sent

them out to justify the character I gave him."

There were at least half-a-dozen persons in New York alone who would need copies; and Dickens, with his knowledge of legal process, doubtless added sufficient duplicates. We have seen him giving out copies to two English editors; and there were others in London (Thomas Chapman, John Allan, and himself, particularly) who would wish to have specimens by them — at least until the trouble was settled. Thus the pamphlet had to be printed in the limited edition normal with such things. And somewhere in both America and England copies of this, the rarest item of Dickensiana and worth almost more than its weight in diamonds, are probably still lurking in musty legal offices and long unopened deed-boxes.

On the result of the dispatch to America of copies of the precious pamphlet my Powell dossier throws no light. It is a reasonable surmise that the gentleman in jail was speedily released. Maybe he found solace, even glory, in his unexpected and perhaps not too painful martyrdom in the cause of Truth and Charles Dickens. As for the threatened libel action, that certainly never materialized. The bluff hearty John Bull could only have been bluffing. And Dickens successfully called his bluff. But he failed to deliver the knock-out.

The only mystery that remains (and even equally long researches in New York might not solve it now) is how Thomas Powell's reputation survived all the ugly scandal. It did, however. The biographer (and provoker!) of *The Living Authors of England* went on from one journalistic and literary success to another, becoming the esteemed — even the adored — of his wide circle in the United States, until his death in 1877: when, according to Eckel, he committed suicide. If the last statement is correct, it is another fact omitted from the notices of him in American "official" biographies.

When Chapman disclosed the first of Powell's financial frauds, Dickens was Christlike towards the robber, and rather crusty towards the robbed. It was the biographical sketch and identification of the *Dombey* original that set him on his campaign of denunciation. But however sincere Powell may have been in the purely literary estimate of his subject, there was unmistakeable hostility, an underlying motive of retaliation, in his personal criticisms. Dickens was entitled to defend himself. Whether the method he chose had the approval of his mentor John Forster is questionable. And the fact that the biographer is silent about all these momentous proceedings, the very stuff of biography, may be his commentary on the issue.



GRANDPA'S SIGN

by RUTH McKENNEY

My Grandpa Flannigan had six daughters, but in their opinion he never did anything at all to help them get married, at least to the right people. My mother and her sisters favored refined young men who wore straw boaters, went to law school, and played the mandolin. Grandpa, on the other hand, had an extremely poor opinion of lawyers. He told one of my mother's most serious admirers, an embryo barrister named Ronald, to stop being a tool of Wall Street and take up something honest, such as bricklaying. Afterwards Grandpa claimed he was just being fatherly to Ronald, but Mother was outraged — Ronald never came back for any more kindly advice.

Grandpa was a disciple of Robert Ingersoll, too, and very enthusiastic about atheism. The first time my future Uncle Robert came to Sunday dinner Grandpa got embroiled in a brisk debate on religion with Great-aunt Minnie. Great-aunt Minnie belonged to the not-a-sparrow-shall-fall school, and when she claimed that the Heavenly Father had sent the moles on her double chin, just to test her spiritual fortitude, Grandpa became annoyed. He rose dramatically from his chair, brandished the carving knife at the ceiling, and sonorously dared God to strike him dead. Aunt Minnie and the other Flannigans were used to Grandpa inviting lightning bolts and paid little attention, but Uncle Robert,

a Methodist, was paralyzed with terror. The fork and knife clattered from his limp fingers, and, speechless, he closed his eyes, waiting for the end.

"Papa's just joking," Aunt Kate explained, with an anguished giggle.

Uncle Robert, madly infatuated, actually came back again to the Flannigan house, but lots of less determined young men did not. Grandpa was not only interested in Robert Ingersoll's atheism, he was also a hotheaded partisan of Edward Bellamy's Utopian Socialism, Henry George's Single Tax, the Sinn Fein rebellion, the Democratic Party, and various other heresies. The Flannigan girls found Grandpa was a staggering handicap. For instance, in the Flannigan front parlor hung a large picture of an obscure and melancholy Irishman, draped in heavy black crepe; on the opposite wall, facing this photograph of the martyred dead, was an immense placard announcing, "Irish BLOOD cries out for VENGEANCE."

The young ladies Flannigan pleaded endlessly with their papa to take down this sign. Other people, they said, did not have signs on their parlor walls.

"Pah," Grandpa always said when he heard about other people.

"You'll be sorry," my mother replied furiously. "We'll be old maids. All six of us."

Grandpa did not consider this very likely, he said — there were altogether too many mandolin players cluttering up the back parlor and tenderly making fudge in the kitchen. "Dull, spiritless fellows, these lads of yours, Maggie. Like that pipsqueak of a cr-r-reature, the one with the cane and

It was in the columns of the *New Yorker* that RUTH McKENNEY first established herself as an American humorist, author of those hilarious sketches which composed her popular book, *My Sister Eileen*, and were in turn the source of her immensely successful play. In these days of little humor, the *Atlantic* takes pleasure in publishing a story drawn from her new book, *The Loud Red Patrick*, which is to be published this autumn.

the mental palsy, what was his name? The tool —"

"Ronald was *not* a tool," Mother cried.

Grandpa laughed heartlessly. "He had a mind like a little child. Or a bird. That you can't deny, Maggie. You'd never have been after wanting to marry *him*, Maggie?"

2

MOTHER was too exasperated to argue, and besides, two weeks after the Tool had disappeared, Mother met Father at a college dance. In those days, Father was a very prissy and refined young man, and cautious, too, but he was instantly dazzled by the Flannigan black curls and bright blue eyes. He asked permission to call, after the second waltz. Mother thought it over and decided Father was safe. Father was a mechanical engineer. In an excess of optimism, influenced no doubt by Father's snappy two-step and his genteel white gloves, my mother wound up by inviting her new admirer to dinner.

Grandpa promised (somewhat sullenly) not to ask God to strike him dead at the supper table and Mother had high hopes for the evening. At the last moment, however, Grandpa came home from the office with two Irish revolutionists fresh over from the old country.

"Mama!" my mother said desperately, out in the kitchen. "Please!"

Grandma banged the oven door so hard the Yorkshire pudding fell, as indeed it usually did. Grandma was not a very good cook, at best, but she went all to pieces under the stress of the Irish question. For although Grandpa, a man of mighty passions, loved Ireland fiercely, Grandma was English — and not just born in Derbyshire, either. Grandma was Cromwell English, Disraeli English, Churchill English. She spat on the Irish (except Grandpa) — "dirty creatures," Grandma said. It was Grandma's considered opinion that nothing better had ever happened to Ireland than the English occupation. "Benighted savages, full of Popery," Grandma often remarked, in her strong Derbyshire accent. "Cromwell brought them as much of civilization as they could bear." Which was not much, Grandma felt.

It always seemed something of a minor miracle that Grandpa and Grandma achieved forty years and more of happy married life, in spite of the battle of Cromwell, which was not the less bitter because it was refought two hundred and fifty years later in the Flannigan front parlor. Of course Grandpa and Grandma loved each other very much

— but affection never blinded them to the fatal defects in each other's politics.

"Mama," my mother said tearfully. "Just this once. He's a mechanical engineer, Mama. PLEASE!"

Father, all aquiver at seeing the lovely Miss Flannigan again, arrived promptly at six. During the roast beef and sunken Yorkshire pudding stage of the evening, Father thought Miss Flannigan's relatives were queer, but awfully jolly. At the head of the dinner table, Grandpa, with the two Sinn Feiners on either side of him, talked darkly about raising money to dynamite British arsenals in Dublin; at the foot of the table Grandma banged the dishes quite a bit, but kept her peace. The six Flannigan girls, including Mother, giggled hysterically and continuously, to drown out Grandpa. However, nothing terrible happened over the home-made ice cream, and Mother had just decided, nervously, that everything was going as well as could be expected, when Grandpa announced that everybody would now gather around the piano in the front parlor and sing. Mother did her best to show Father the sea-shell collection in the back parlor, but young Mr. McKenney was a little vain about his tenor. He supposed he would get a chance to harmonize soulfully (for Miss Flannigan's edification) on "Juanita" or "Tenting Tonight." When the McKenneys crowded around *their* upright, they also favored "My Old Kentucky Home," and even, when they felt frivolous, "Come, Josephine, on My Flying Machine."

My father discovered, as soon as Aunt Kate struck the first chord, that Flannigans were made of sterner musical stuff than McKenneys. The opening number was a ballad entitled "Kevin Barry."

"SHOOT me like an I — rish SOLDIER, Do not HANG me like a dog!" Grandpa bellowed between sobs, "For I FOUGHT for I — rish FREEDOM. . . ."

Grandma did not join the family song-fest. She rattled the dishes as she cleared the dining-room table. In the front parlor, Grandpa got all choked up, explaining to Father about the last thing Irishmen heard as their ships weighed anchor and the long voyage to America began. "On the quay, the weeping mothers, the heartbroken sweethearts, and the lonely children sing as the ships move into the stream. Ah, I hear the sad music yet, in my dreams," Grandpa declared, which was remarkable because he was born six miles off Ellis Island, almost, but not quite, an American citizen. However, prenatal influence was strong and Grandpa wept as he clarified in his beautiful, strong tenor, "Come back to Erin, Mavourneen, Mavourneen. . . ."

Just at first Father was a little surprised by the Flannigan recital, but soon he got into the spirit of the evening. Aunt Kate, prompted by Grandpa, reluctantly banged the opening bars of "The Wearing of the Green."

"Mr. McKenney," Mother said, "wouldn't you care to play ouija?"

But Father enjoyed singing. "O Paddy dear, an' did ye hear, The NEWS that's goin' round?"

Mother gritted her teeth and hoped for the best. Grandma held out through the news that shamrocks were forbidden to bloom on Irish sod, but when Grandpa started off on the second verse, Grandma lost control — she could not, Mr. McKenney or no Mr. McKenney, allow the Union Jack to be insulted, under her own roof, too. Grandpa, his voice ringing out proudly, denounced "England's CRU — EL Red. . . ." Grandma dropped a large stack of plates on the kitchen floor. Grandpa's two Irish revolutionists came instantly to the alert; Father, when he heard this doomsday crash, turned pale. But Grandpa, ignoring the awful noise from the kitchen, tried to bluster his way through the second verse. However, Aunt Kate faltered at the piano and Grandma appeared at the parlor doors crying, "Rule, Britannia!"

Father had never before met people who took politics so seriously, and he was shaken by the debate which followed Grandma's battle cry, "The King! God Save Him!" She challenged Grandpa and his Sinn Fein colleagues to name one battle when Irishmen hadn't run backwards at the sight of England's gallant (not cruel) red.

"We were outnumbered," Grandpa bawled.

"Outnumbered! Paltry talk! When Cromwell landed, he had only a handful against the savage Irish hordes."

"Mama!" my mother and her sisters cried, but it was much too late — Grandpa always took offense at the word "savage."

"Bloody oppressors!" Grandpa thundered. "WE WILL BE REVENGED."

The Irish revolutionists took the dispute nearly as hard as Father, who did not stay to play ouija, but left with the visiting Sinn Feiners; they were muttering about having fallen into a den of British thieves. Grandpa feared that his friends thought he was an English spy, harboring, as he did, a partisan of Cromwell, right in his own house. Mother was brokenhearted. She was convinced that her latest beau must think her family very peculiar — she was perfectly right, too. It took father three days to pull himself together; then he cautiously asked Mother to a football game. He would have to call for her, to be sure, and bring her home again, but if

he played his cards right, and carefully avoided Flannigan family sings, he felt pretty certain of himself.

3

MOTHER was anxious about the weather, but the Saturday afternoon turned out clear and crisp, a lovely October day, exactly right for her colossal new velvet hat and Aunt Kate's fur neckpiece. All the Flannigan womenfolk, even Grandma, gathered in Mother's bedroom to give advice and assistance on final touches.

Grandpa also thought the weather was very nice. Happily he caroled "Kathleen Mavourneen" as he nailed a large sign across the railing of the front porch. The sign said in very large letters, clearly visible from the street, "I AM A DEMOCRAT."

"Papa's hammering something," Aunt Kate reported from the bedroom window.

Mother was now seated at the big mirror, absorbed in a delicate task — anchoring the hat on her pompadour. "What's he hammering?" she asked.

Aunt Kate leaned out the upstairs window. "It's a sign," she said, after a moment.

"A sign!" Mother was instantly alarmed. She didn't want anything to go wrong, the second time that refined young Mr. McKenney called. "You go see, Bess."

Bessie, aged eight, the youngest of the Flannigan maidens, left the heady atmosphere of the boudoir with extreme reluctance. She was back almost immediately. "It's just some old politics sign. For the election, I guess," Bessie said carelessly. "Papa said Mr. Healy, the motorman, told him there was going to be a parade today, so Papa got the sign painter, and it was finished just in time, the paint's still wet. Papa's getting it on his trousers, Mama. Anyway it's a big sign and it cost \$5.40. Are you going to put on powder this time, Maggie?"

"POWDER!" Grandma cried. "Margaret Flannigan, have you been using POWDER?"

"Now, Mama — " my mother began nervously, forgetting all about politics and signs and parades.

In the meantime, while Grandpa blithely nailed his sign across the front porch, while my mother passionately argued the ethics of just a little talcum powder for a shiny nose, my father, sat stiffly on a Kinsman Road streetcar, speeding nearer and nearer to the Flannigan house. Father was modishly attired in a brand-new gray derby and a brand-new tweed raglan topcoat; he had a huge yellow mum, tied with the Case School of Engineering colors, clasped in one respectably gloved hand. Did he dare to hope that the beautiful Miss Flannigan

would allow him, personally, to pin the mum on her suit coat? Dreamily, tenderly, but a little nervously too, Father considered strategy. His mood, on this splendid Saturday afternoon in late October, was, everything considered, profoundly a-political. He heard, without the least curiosity, the noise of a brass band; from the streetcar window, he watched idly as the Fifth Ward Republican Club marched from the side street into Kinsman Road. Father was a Republican, and he intended to cast his very first vote, in November, for William Howard Taft, that prince of American statesmen; on the other hand, father was not interested in the Fifth Ward Republican parade. Father's mind was on Mother that day, not the 1908 election.

But Father was not a lucky man. The motorman at the helm of Father's trolley car was not bemused, like Father, with the finer things of life. Mr. O'Flaherty was deeply interested in the 1908 election, and he was not in the least Republican. Moreover, this Mr. O'Flaherty was a craftsman who sincerely loved his work. He was outraged by having his streetcar tracks cluttered up, even temporarily, by a brass band and a lot of Republican ward leaders in silk hats. Mr. O'Flaherty made his schedule through rain and sleet and dark of night. Why should he throw on the brakes for a lot of ruffians who intended to vote for Taft? If Mr. O'Flaherty had only held his peace, Father might have taken Mother to the football game. Unfortunately, however, Mr. O'Flaherty was a man of mettlesome temperament. He leaned out the front window of his streetcar and bawled, "We shall NOT be crucified on a cross of gold! NEVER!" Then he nipped four minor Republicans and a piccolo player with the cowcatcher.

The outrage, among the Republicans, was tremendous. Even Father was startled out of his dreams of love. The Fifth Ward attacked the streetcar with paving bricks. Mr. O'Flaherty at first held the upper hand. He threw on the power and charged. Some of the Republicans dodged just in time. The dispute now grew serious. Father's streetcar was surrounded by a mass of paraders; in spite of Mr. O'Flaherty and his conductor, Mr. Jackson, the Republicans pulled the trolley arm off the overhead wire and left Mr. O'Flaherty fuming helplessly in the stalled car. The ward leaders now rallied their forces; quite a few wanted to turn the streetcar over, but wiser heads prevailed. The parade, in an aroused mood, marched up Kinsman Road.

It took Mr. O'Flaherty and Mr. Jackson ten minutes to get the car started again. Father fretted for fear he would be late, but at last he saw the Flannigan house.

He also saw the Republican parade, which seemed to have disintegrated. Father, peering nervously out the window, rang the bell, Mr. O'Flaherty slammed on the brakes, and Father jumped down to the street. He took another look across Kinsman Road, and his heart lurched. The Republicans were attacking the home of his beloved Miss Flannigan; indeed, they appeared to be personally attacking Miss Flannigan's father and, as he watched, horrified, the lovely Miss Flannigan herself.

4

THE riot had started, the police established later, when the Fifth Ward spotted Grandpa's sign. The simple words, "I AM A DEMOCRAT," brazenly displayed in a part of Cleveland where there were no Democrats (except Grandpa and some streetcar motormen), stung the Republicans to action. Breaking ranks, the Taft ruffians charged across the Flannigan front lawn to the front porch. They meant to capture and burn Grandpa's bold challenge to their delicate sensibilities, but Grandpa, of course, was no man to strike his colors and retreat. On the contrary, he was always more than happy to do battle for a just cause; he met the enemy head-on. Leaning over the porch railing, he joyously slugged oncoming Republicans as he bawled, "Up Bryan! Up Bryan! Bryan Forever!"

At this point Mother rushed out the front door, crying, "Papa, how could you? Mr. McKenney's coming any minute! Papa! Stop!"

The Fifth Ward probably did not mean to strike a respectable young lady, even if her father was a Democrat. No doubt, in all the confusion, my mother got hit by mistake. But Father, witnessing this affront, did not stop to consider.

"Miss Flannigan!" Father cried in an agony of fear, and still clutching the mum, he charged. His intentions were completely chivalrous; like the knights of old, he meant to do battle for the lady he loved. Instead, he got arrested. The police (Democrats all) arrived before Father managed to get through to the Flannigan front porch. Innocent as he was, Father did not, like the other Republicans present, start running when he heard the bells of the speeding Black Maria. The next thing he knew, a large policeman was hitting him with a night stick. Mother was so taken up by the damage to her new hat that she did not even notice Father being arrested. She finally heard his piteous voice from the inside of the police van.

"Miss Flannigan! Miss Flannigan!" Father was calling desperately. "HELP!"

Mother tried to buttonhole the police riot squad, but it was too late. Father was taken to the police station, where he kept explaining that he was going to a football game.

"A likely story," the desk sergeant sneered.

Grandpa was dispatched by my sobbing mother to the rescue of her unfortunate suitor. Grandpa had just arranged for Father's honorable release from the 125th Street Precinct when my father's own father arrived in an extremely truculent frame of mind and denied out of hand that his son was a Democrat. In later years my two grandfathers came to like each other, in a restrained way, but at their first meeting they very nearly resorted to fisticuffs — and in a police station, at that. Grandpa McKenney said that Father was the first in a long line of respectable, God-fearing Scotch-Irish Presbyterian McKenneys to be arrested; he blamed the entire unsavory episode on Grandpa Flannigan.

"It's not enough you're a Democrat! You even put up signs about it! No wonder Sid lost his head."

"Will you be holding your tongue?" Grandpa Flannigan roared. "I say 'tis innocent he is, this poor lad. A brave Democrat, fearless, like a lion, he was taking these black Republicans from the rear, when —"

"No McKenney" — Grandpa McKenney also raised his voice — "ever was, or ever will be, a Democrat."

"Orangeman!" Grandpa Flannigan cried.

Father had to pay a twenty-five-dollar fine and plead guilty to disorderly conduct, after Grandpa Flannigan and Grandpa McKenney were separated by the desk sergeant. Mother felt, when Father timidly telephoned her next day, that love conquers all. Even Grandpa Flannigan admitted that Father had a lot of spirit — for a Republican. Grandma Flannigan said that for a man with six unmarried daughters, Grandpa ought to think twice before he put up signs on the front porch. But Grandpa was not in the least sorry about the sign; so far as he was concerned, he said, he was looking for a son-in-law who believed in the Single Tax.



NO DOGS BARK

by HUGH CHISHOLM

OUR time is now
and now is dark.
No roosters crow
and no dogs bark.

Each day is black
with sun and snow.
The poem's lack
is all we know.

In everything
our tale is told.
The songs we sing
are old old old.

Tattoo the stars
with mud and tears —
tomorrow's wars
are last night's fears,

and breakers take
their time for none,
nor heart can break
for anyone.

Tex

Texas, the only state which was once a nation under its own flag, is bigger than France with Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland thrown in, and this heritage of size has affected the behavior of every native son. We know that Texas is the biggest and potentially the richest state in the Union. But how about its political leadership? How about its attitude toward the Negro and the Mexican? How about the integrity of its educational system? How about the conservation of its resources? For answer we turn to Dixon Wecter, a Texan born and bred, a historian whose books are widely respected, and an author who has been appointed literary editor of the Mark Twain estate.

HOW BIG IS TEXAS?

by DIXON WECTER

1

THE magniloquence of Texans has come to be a stock property of regional humor, along with the Coolidge-like traits of Vermont and the boosterism of California. Regarding the only republic of ten years' standing to enter the Union by treaty, innumerable GI stories have been heard — of the Lone Star flag planted on some beachhead before the Stars and Stripes, or the message received at GHQ on V-J Day, signed by three Texas Marines, "Does this surrender apply to us too?" The new Governor, Beauford Jester, recently published an expansive article called "Texans Are a Race of People."

A third-generation Texan myself, I may be forgiven for confessing more than a little boredom with the professional Texan, who identifies himself on sight and talks freely of his origins as if the miracle of his genesis had left him somewhat dazed. It sometimes seems as if this state's first legendary hero, Davy Crockett, that old ring-tailed roarer, had passed on his coonskin cap not only to Pecos Bill, Bigfoot Wallace, and Strap Buckner, but in a measure to the whole citizenry.

In a Texan this heritage has grown to be the expected thing, along with behavior which is a shade unusual. The eccentricities of a gentleman who used to stand on his head in places like the foyer of the Metropolitan Opera were satisfactorily explained in the New York press by the circumstance that he came from Texas. But pride of place and tradition, when controlled by social intelligence, can also be a very fine thing, leading its bearer to carry himself with dignity, act with responsibility, and (in Emerson's phrase) treat with other men "as sovereign state with sovereign state."

This pride is the prime reason why Texas will never claim the right, under terms of its admission

to the Union, to divide itself like a paramecium into five parts. "Who will be willing to give up the name of Texas?" asked the *State Gazette* back in 1852. "Which State would yield the emblem of a single star . . . [or] the bloodstained walls of the Alamo?" These things are indivisible. Furthermore, as every Texan will tell you, the fission of his state would end the boast of size — in a region rich in similes like "as big as hell and half of Texas." Area long ago became the yardstick by which citizens like to measure other superlatives of their commonwealth.

Yet the most remarkable fact about Texas is not magnitude but diversity. Like a long bridge, Texas vibrates in sections. Its unity is grounded upon the piers of history and sentiment, not the mandates of economic geography.

In trying to puzzle out the logic of Texas a regionalist might well despair. Climates, drainage basins, crops, industries, cultural patterns are all a very mixed lot. The Panhandle, with its high prairies and icy northers, obviously has little in common with the lush, subtropical lower Rio Grande Valley. But the cleavage which tends to absorb all others (aligning the Panhandle with the West, the coastal valleys with the East) roughly follows the ninety-eighth meridian. It divides the old cotton kingdom from that of wheat and cattle, the pine woods and sweet gum from mesquite and hackberry and, still farther, the land of greasewood and cactus.

While East Texas shows the dominant (and now badly depleted) red and yellow soils of the Deep South, the high prairies share the soil of the Great Plains, whose wealth of minerals like magnesium and calcium, not leached out by floods, is transmitted to the "hard" wheat grown here, also to grasses and thence to beef. Early settlers are said to have noted the effect of such pasturing in converting

old horses into mettlesome bronchos; certainly the wild, buffalo-hunting Comanches of the Staked Plains were unlike the mild agricultural Indians of the eastern river bottoms, from whom came the name *tejas*, meaning "friendship." Recently Professor Albrecht, University of Missouri agronomist, has declared that the state's "dauntless and aggressive people are a consequence, in part at least, of her great area of prairie soils."

I am not sure about the correlation between minerals and manliness, vitamins and virtues, but from many years' observation I am certain that Texas has a split personality, cleft between East and West. I was born in Houston forty-one years ago and spent every summer of my youth there with grandparents — Houston's summer climate, I regret to add, being not unlike that of Mexico's Quintana Roo. Between this metropolis of the Southwest (for filial piety forbids concealment) and the region where I grew up during the rest of each year, Brewster County on the Rio Grande (the biggest county, I am constrained to add), no more resemblance exists than between Alabama and Arizona.

Houston was then a fragment of the Old South — dreamy, charming, languorous, just beginning to feel the tug of world commerce but not yet swept into the main stream. Today, of course, the economic landscape has changed, thanks to the prodigal wealth of petroleum and sulphur and the ship channel lined with half a billion dollars of industrial installations, like those which blew up with such catastrophic effect at Texas City near by. Houston itself is the nation's sixth biggest port, and its brood of war-hatched enterprises owes something also to the incubative concern of Jesse Jones. Another local millionaire, Roy Cullen, last spring brought Houston into the national news by giving a fortune of between 100 and 160 million dollars to the municipal university and medical education. This city — its proud skyscrapers alternating with shacks and vacant lots — has now become part of the major industrial structure of the United States, along with Cleveland and St. Louis, and it is much too prosperously cosmopolitan to claim sisterhood with Natchez and Mobile. Houston, like most of urban Texas, is living far less in the aura of a Lost Cause than in that of the main chance and a still more affluent tomorrow.

Yet upon certain social, cultural, and political levels the region dominated by Houston — East Texas — is bound at least sentimentally to the South, just as that portion of the state from San Antonio to El Paso marches with New Mexico, Arizona, and the Pacific slope — regions which, in

part, the exuberant Texans of 1848 tried to annex as the "County of Santa Fé." Within the constellation of the Union, the Lone Star today finds itself poised between the Southern Cross and the Hesperus of the western states.

Despite an Alabama and Texas grandfather who wore the Confederate gray, I have never felt that Texans had much to gain by mulling over a war in which their state was not overrun and where so-called Reconstruction was comparatively mild. Some East Texans, in particular, still have vague romantic feelings about the Bonny Blue Flag — perhaps because Texans are rebels by disposition, and have always chafed a little in the Federal harness — but the majority seem even in my lifetime to have grown steadily more indifferent to the legend of the Old South, with its contrasts of glamour and squalor, the hookworm and the honeysuckle.

2

YET that ghost of slavery, the race problem, still haunts Texas, particularly in the rural east and central regions, although the Negro population has shrunk from a third in 1870 to less than a seventh today. Here as elsewhere, the dormant virus of intolerance and hatred — unhappily as universal as mankind — can be kept from multiplying only by a healthy state of mind, among individuals and communities alike, and by economic health. For of course, in any unprosperous milieu, competition for lean pickings always aggravates race friction along the planes of each section's pet prejudice, victimizing the Negro in East Texas, the Mexican in the Southwest, the Oriental in the Far West. Hence among the eastern stretches of the state — the piney woods and small towns where the Klan of a quarter century ago drew its support, and which used to elect Martin Dies to Congress until the influx of war workers and a spirit of urban progressivism overtook his home town of Orange — Texas most nearly resembles certain backward regions of Georgia and Tennessee.

In this portion of Texas, agriculture is sick and has long been so — a fact which horizons of oil wells and booming shipyards edging the Gulf cannot disguise. Like the pioneer community it once was, Texas has burned up its natural resources — not only petroleum and virgin timber but the once fat topsoil — at a prodigal rate, although new developments like the State Research Foundation in Dallas and its investigation of chemurgy and conservation presage better times. Today over half the farmers of Texas are tenants;

two in five own no car, and four in five no tractor. Texas still leads the Union in cotton production, but has the lowest yield per acre, while California heads the roll; Texas's sixteen bushels of corn per acre might be contrasted with Iowa's sixty.

Between 1930 and 1940, some 200,000 Texas farmers deserted their acres — over half the total number of defeated agriculturalists in the whole Mississippi drainage area — and among the Negro population, withdrawal from rural areas proceeded twice as fast as with whites. This is one of the reasons why the race problem in Texas is drawing a little nearer at least to a numerical solution. The Negro health record, particularly in respect to malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid, and venereal disease, is strikingly poorer than that of whites, and is likely to remain so until the state provides education for Negro doctors.

Here certain important developments apparently are brewing. Under threat of Supreme Court action along the lines of Missouri's famous Gaines case, agitation by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and pressure from local progressives (who are more numerous than outsiders believe), the outlook for higher education for Texas Negroes has suddenly brightened. The Legislature has approved a bill providing for the construction of a Negro university at Houston, and has passed a constitutional amendment appropriating for such education an annual amount equal to one sixth of the income from a 60-million-dollar permanent fund (derived mainly from state oil lands) which is now divided between the University of Texas and the A.&M. College. But the NAACP, unappeased, fights on for mixed rather than segregated colleges.

Although three out of five white adults favor continuance of the poll tax, as the Texas Poll reported as lately as May, 1946, the fair-mindedness of Texans toward the Negro has increased appreciably in my lifetime and observation. Among denominational groups, the cause of racial understanding has been promoted markedly in recent times by clergy and educators of the Episcopal Church. Among progressives, the Negro is coming to be recognized as an integral part of the East Texas region, like its soil and skies and his white neighbors with whom ancestrally he took root.

West Texas is more aware of the Spanish-speaking minority, whose numbers have grown from 70,000 in 1900 to 1,000,000 today — four out of five being United States citizens by birth or naturalization. With its thousand-mile Rio Grande border, Texas is the chief proving ground for good will between Latin and North America. Yet in most small towns,

persons of Mexican descent are barred from cafés, barbershops, schools, and sometimes the right to vote. The railroads and farmers of the new north-west cotton belt pay them substandard wages; labor unions exclude them along with Negroes. In 1943, nettled by long discrimination, Mexico set the present ban upon migration of her nationals into Texas. Her best cartoonist drew a restaurant bearing the sign, "We serve everybody — even Texans."

Today the situation is better, thanks partly to the war record of Texas Latins. The Good Neighbor Commission, made a state agency in 1945, builds self-respect in both camps. The Farm Labor Office has dotted West and Central Texas with reception centers for migratory workers, and the State Department of Education is fostering better attitudes in the schools, while seeking to end that complex of conditions which keeps nearly half the state's Latin American children from attending any school, public or parochial.

West Texas's other problems set it apart from the East. Its agriculture pivots upon the conservation not of soil but water; vast tracts will never support crops. But these western plains, sending two million head of cattle each year to northern markets, are now rapidly outstripping in economic importance the river bottoms of East Texas, or the black lands of the central area. The primacy which cattle-raising had in early days but lost by mid-nineteenth century to that of cotton began to reassert itself about 1923. In contrast to the dwindling yield of Texas agriculture, that of the livestock business is booming steadily, and now leads the nation in beef cattle, sheep and lambs, mules and goats — an output valued annually at about 700 million dollars. It is proverbial that West Texas has more cows and less milk than any other place on earth; like most people who grew up on the range, I gained a perverse taste for milk out of a can.

3

WEST TEXAS used to regard itself as very badly used by the thickly settled and greedy East — the same situation, on a local scale, as the psychology of the Great West vis-à-vis the Atlantic seaboard. As a Texas friend of mine says, the West begins wherever people start carrying a chip on their shoulder about the East. It was complained that tax revenues from the western population, along with the sale or usufruct of the tens of millions of acres in public lands lying in the West, seemed preponderantly to go to the more favored section — for building a state capitol, a university,

and various charitable institutions, as well as subsidizing railway construction along the seaboard.

That tension has eased somewhat since my Brewster County boyhood, when there was bold talk about a "State of Jefferson," largely for its nuisance value. The grumbling has since borne fruit in the creation, for example, of a spectacularly growing institution in the Texas Technological College at Lubbock. Lacking a major state university within range of hundreds of miles, the population has made that college far more than its name implies, a big center for higher education in general, while western legislators, by sly perennial demands for a slice of the 60-million-dollar endowment from state oil lands, have won for it a series of generous appropriations.

This interior Texas is the product of the longest weathering by the frontier to which any part of the nation has been subjected, a toughening process stretching from Spanish and Mexican days almost to date. Wars over fence-cutting and brands and water rights, incursions of drought and dust storms, the epic of cattle and the epic of oil — two of man's most rugged ways of livelihood — have left their mark upon the country and its people. It is a land long tinged with western melodrama.

What is commonly conceived to be the Texas hallmark — generous, breezy, nonchalant, cocky — belongs a good deal more to these western plains than to the land of cotton. Generalizing about regional traits is always treacherous, but a few observations may be risked here. The plainsman is more deliberate and easygoing than the Far Westerner, but closer to that type than to the classic Southerner. In comparison with the latter he seems more definitely the extrovert and less the sentimentalist, with a firmer line to his jaw and the planting of his hat. The Texas plainsman is also more spontaneously democratic, apt to be interested in individuals rather than their grandfathers; he is convinced it is more important to be an ancestor than a descendant.

Upon the Texas tradition the plainsman has imposed his hearty individualism, as any reader of J. Frank Dobie will readily comprehend. Such diverse modern careers as those of Maury Maverick in politics, of Robert R. Young in the railroad business, have the indefinably West Texas quality. And of course the old patterns of ethics and justice owe something to this mold. One still hears quoted the saying of Captain Bill McDonald of the Rangers, "No man in the wrong can stand up against a fellow that's in the right — and keeps on a-comin'," and likewise the remark attributed to Judge Roy P. Bean, famous through all the

Pecos country, that "in Texas the first question to be decided by a jury in any homicide case is, 'Should the deceased have departed?'" On the whole, the traditions in whose mirror Texans like to see themselves are more western than southern.

4

THE dilemma of Texas is that of a state garbed traditionally in Confederate gray, which for a long time has been discovering that its decaying cotton agriculture and the rise of diversified farming, oil, and other extractive industries, as well as its rapid urban growth and manufactures, give it a complexity of economic and political interests undreamed of a generation ago. Its divided mind may be illustrated by Texans' widespread uneasiness, sometimes convulsive allergy, in the presence of four rather miscellaneous concepts: Republicanism, liberalism, organized labor, absentee control.

Back in 1845 Guy M. Bryan said tersely, "We are all Democrats in Texas." And for a while after the Civil War the simple maxim ran, "Vote as you shot." But scars heal, new industry and prosperity draw masses of immigrants from the North, manufacturers and oilmen and cattlemen feel little kinship with the cotton bloc, and deep cleavages wrought by the New Deal still remain. Despite the large personal popularity of the late President Roosevelt, the early ardor of many Texans for the Administration departed with Jack Garner and the commencement of a third term. Here as elsewhere, the war helped to create an external unity of purpose, but considerable pressure of revolt simmered under the lid — taking such shapes as the prosperous plainsman's devotion to "free enterprise" and some ranchers' opposition to reciprocal trade treaties which began to invite beef from Canada and South America, along with a mixture of Southern qualms concerning the Roosevelts' friendship for the Negro and the appointment of a Presidential agent at the Vatican.

In the past twenty years, Texas political dissent has begotten "Constitutional Democrats," "Hoovercrats," a sprinkling of Liberty Leaguers, "Jeffersonian Democrats," and in 1944 the anti-Roosevelt "Regulars" — this label (along with its heavy radio and financial backing from the purveyor of laxative salts called Crazy Crystals) possessing faintly cathartic overtones that were something less than happy — not to mention about 200,000 faithful Republicans, pitted against 800,000 straight Democratic voters. Although affluent Houston was the cradle of the Regulars, it remains a core

of invincible anti-Republicanism. When in April, 1947, a special election was held to fill a state senatorial seat vacated by death, no fewer than forty-two Democrats filed, while the total number of persons who showed up for a Republican mass meeting to pick a candidate was only thirty-two. In consequence, no Republican nominee entered at all, and the Democratic winner received less than a quarter of the total votes cast.

Why not a flourishing Republican Party in Texas, healthy enough to include grass roots as well as country-club turf? Its effect in creating open debate rather than huggermugger in the caucus, and in putting candidates on their mettle until after the November frost, would seem salutary. Republican leadership showing higher political intelligence than previously displayed in this state would find much fruit ripe for the plucking. Harold Stassen recently visited here admittedly "to get you people into the Republican column," and Speaker Joseph Martin is expected later. As a lifelong Democrat I incline to agree with a friend of two-party government lately quoted in the *Dallas News*: "It is like a bunch of kids wanting to play cowboy and Indian. All want to be cowboys. I think we need more Texas Republicans, but I don't want to be one!"

Today the wrench is not so severe as it once might have seemed, because the line where Democrats leave off and Republicans begin is none too clear. Ever since the 1936 campaign, a Republican candidate appears to be a man who promises the more abundant life at bargain rates, although a few promise just the bargain rates. In this motley political circus—with a Democratic President trying earnestly to balance the budget out of the hands of the Republican majority, and the latter emerging as the champion of states' rights against federalism—the jump from one ring to another should not be too difficult.

Less lip-service to the Democratic Party and more searching bipartisan debate would help aerate the political soil, cropping those unhealthy fungi that sometimes sprout in the shade of provincial demagoguery—such as W. Lee O'Daniel, for example, a "Kansas carpetbagger" who (to paraphrase a saying of Bierce) is nothing if not the hillbilly's friend, and he is not the hillbilly's friend. Texans share enough of the southern love for buncombe and florid showmanship to boost occasional buffoons to high office, but their political life-expectancy is shorter than in Georgia and Mississippi. O'Daniel is already a dead duck. The man who is supposedly ready to oust him next year is former Governor Coke Stevenson, at one time "Pappy's" running mate, a cold customer but an

intelligent one, whom O'Daniel is already calling an "ingrate" because of his aspirations to be junior Senator.

Also none too popular in Texas is the word liberal. To many it chimes with a recent definition (undoubtedly inspired by Henry Wallace) that a liberal is a man with both feet firmly planted in the air. It was used last year to damn Homer P. Rainey, ousted University of Texas president and unsuccessful candidate for Governor; more recently Charles Bolté, head of the American Veterans Committee and a stout fighter against Red borers in his organization, was refused an invitation as guest speaker before the Texas Legislature under the allegation that he was "too liberal." By and large, Texans have not yet realized that to lump together all varieties of so-called liberal opinion and pour them into the same bin with the Communists is of enormous help to the latter in the perfection of their camouflage.

5

THE suspicion here noted, as strong in the small-town and rural areas as among the oil millionaires of River Oaks, is often akin to that directed toward organized labor. Industrialization has brought to Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, Beaumont, and other industrial centers a class tension unknown to the Texas of my youth, where a picket line was as unfamiliar as a saraband. The war greatly spread the net of unionization, and since that time the CIO has been making a determined effort to close that net with its own ingenious knots. But opposition to organizers from outside the state, to militant union tactics and the closed shop as a form of monopoly, is growing still faster.

Probably the majority of Texans, who are neither city dwellers nor factory workers, approve most or all of those measures lately passed by the Fiftieth Legislature which make Texas, even in these days of anti-labor recoil, one of the most conservative states in the Union. Organized labor in Texas now finds itself fenced in with a remarkable maze of new prohibitions, curbs, and admonitions of responsibility.

If a great many Texans resent the presence of labor organizers from Brooklyn and Detroit, they also tend, though less violently, to distrust that of capitalists from Wall Street and State Street. Much grumbling is heard about absentee control. Dallas, for example, according to one count, has some 2900 manufacturing concerns controlled from outside the state. Too rarely is it admitted that such "foreign" rule has often been made possible by local negligence

of opportunity, or that native bankers and the best managerial brains have joined cheerfully with the so-called carpetbaggers of industry in siphoning off the state's natural resources and legitimate expectations of profit, imitating that wasteful spirit of colonialism whose essence is exploitation. May one paraphrase Robert Frost and say that home is the place where, when you exploit it, you have to stay and take the consequences?

War has served, as nothing else could have done, to decentralize the manufacturing monopoly of the northeastern states; and while a good many southern communities seem disposed to let their war-born industries wilt on the vine or pass from the War Assets Administration into "foreign" hands, a good many Texas businessmen now appear to feel more bullish. Popular applause and a solemn resolution of approval from the Legislature greeted the revival in 1947, under local financing, of the big war-built Lone Star Steel Company at Daingerfield — in the state's northeast corner adjacent to large iron-ore deposits — which bids fair to challenge Big Steel and "Pittsburgh plus" much as Henry Kaiser's Fontana is doing in the Far West.

The spirit of regional protectiveness is not new. A generation ago restrictive measures were begun. The Robertson law compelled insurance companies doing business in the state to invest in Texas properties, and the corporation laws forced oil companies and railroads operating in Texas to obtain resident charters under Texas business labels. These laws touched the façade rather than the reality, causing only minor inconvenience to Standard Oil, the Mellon interests, Electric Bond & Share, and Southern Pacific. And for a long time certain Texans like Congressman Ed Gossett have taken a leading role in attacking discriminatory freight rates, which, since the revisions undertaken in tentative form in 1945 by the Interstate Commerce Commission, give signs of crumbling, to the joy alike of South, Southwest, and West.

The biggest Texas industry is of course the annual 1½-billion-dollar petroleum and natural gas business. One who has traveled through the larger Texas fields, particularly by night, carries an unforgettable impression of magnitude and also appalling waste — the flares of casing-head gas, like giant flambeaus mile after mile against the dark, burning 1 billion, 200 million cubic feet of gas a day, enough to supply sixty cities the size of Dallas, and three quarters of this commercially recoverable. Operation of the Big and Little Inch pipelines from Texas to the Appalachian area, now ready to deliver 140 million cubic feet of gas daily, is an important step in the right direction.

As for petroleum, the war vastly speeded production, but resulted in no discovery of important new fields, and the fruits of this transient prosperity are seen largely to be vanishing beyond the grasp of local advantage, save for a few urban owners and managers, notably in Houston, Corsicana, and Beaumont. Although West Texas has important oil fields, the regional dictation over this industry is still concentrated in the big East Texas cities, and this circumstance inevitably tends toward the old sectional jealousy already mentioned, as well as friction between the have and have-not counties in respect to taxing such wealth.

The hottest issue now before the Texas Legislature is a natural-resources tax bill, sponsored by Representative Woodrow Bean of El Paso and other legislators from oil-poor areas. This bill seeks to tap the flow of oil, gas, and sulphur for revenue purposes — notably to finance bills recently passed to raise teachers' salaries to a 2000-dollar yearly minimum and provide a per capita apportionment of 55 dollars per pupil. (In education Texas stands thirty-eighth among the states.) The rocketing profit of oil companies since the war's end is the immediate fulcrum of this argument. Its most powerful opponent is Governor Jester from Corsicana, concerning whom a current quip runs that "the Lone Star Flag has been displaced over the Capitol by the sign of the Flying Red Horse." Like a good many other East Texans, he is a foe of the Federal Power Commission, which, he argues, "has invaded the proper sphere of state sovereignty" in holding down field prices on natural gas. In late April the Governor refused to sign these educational bills, apparently on the ground that they would rob the oil-rich counties to give to the others, but stayed his veto after it was certain that both Houses would override it. Still more vigorously he has opposed the heavier natural-resources taxes necessary to implement this program, claiming his election last year as "a mandate from the people against new taxes." The issue, bitterly debated, remains unsettled, but it seems likely that within the next year or two the long and profitable joy-ride of eastern oil and sulphur corporations in the Texas field, uninterrupted since the Spindletop gusher was brought in, back in 1902, is due for a sharp curb.

Such are among the fault lines which divide the biggest state, running along with the chief geological ones, in a manner largely to separate East from West. While they do not mean that Texas will ever claim its unique right of fragmentation, they do explain some of the reactions — economic, social, and political — that make Texas one of the most interesting laboratories of change in the Union.



AN ATLANTIC "FIRST"

A Story

THE MUSE AND MR. PARKINSON

by JAMES B. GIDNEY

I HAD known Mr. Parkinson for several years before he became a national figure. I didn't know him very well but only as everyone who rode the 7.51 knew him. We said "Hello" when we met and occasionally, riding together on the train or the ferry, we exchanged the superficial remarks of two people who don't know each other very well and belong to different generations. He would talk mostly about his children, and, like many people who rode the same train, I followed Bob through Amherst and Priscilla through Smith. He would keep us up-to-date with such information as: "Priscilla's doing very well at Smith. A couple of A's this term"; or "Bob's running the mile this year. Seems to be pretty good at it. Surprised his mother but it didn't surprise me. The kid's not very husky but he's wiry." He would think this over for a moment and then confirm it with: "Yes, he's pretty wiry all right."

If I had been asked to describe Mr. Parkinson I should probably have said that he was a "typical commuter." He was a sort of abstract of all the commuters in existence. He usually walked to the station in the morning, but when the weather was bad his wife drove him down in time to catch the 7.51. After a perfunctory kiss she drove off, leaving him to chat with other commuters or run an eye over his *Times*. The *Times* was Mr. Parkinson's

only departure from normal commuter behavior. Almost everyone else read the *Tribune*. He never rode in the smoker and never played cards during the half-hour ride to Jersey City. A number of young bloods put in the time in that way but the more sedate commuters read their papers or talked to one another. Mr. Parkinson always read the financial page first as most of the businessmen on the 7.51 did.

When we reached Jersey City he would rush through the Erie shed to the ferry, jostling with the crowds that poured off the trains from various parts of Bergen, Passaic, and Essex Counties. There was no reason for him to hurry since he was an actuary with a big insurance company and didn't have to get to his office early. He rushed for the ferry because he had got in the habit of doing so over the course of a good many years. All the other middle-aged men on the train did the same thing and for the same reason. In fact, the impression Mr. Parkinson always gave me was that, in spite of reading the *Times* instead of the *Tribune*, he was as much like everyone else as it was possible to be. He was such a perfect suburbanite that he appeared almost a caricature of the type. Sometimes when I was talking to him this air of caricature became so pronounced that I felt as if I had been introduced to an English solicitor and he had looked discreet and greeted me with a dry cough.

In the evening he rode out on the 5.46 and read the *Sun*. His wife usually met him at the station and drove him home. If she failed to show up he walked home grumbling good-naturedly about the lot of the "tired businessman." He spent his

A Dartmouth graduate in his early thirties, JAMES B. GIDNEY has been employed as a schoolteacher and in business. During the war he served in the OSS. Now he is having a try at newspaper work and at independent writing. "As to which of these jobs I like best, it is hard to say. I find a great deal of interest in all of them. But as to which is the hardest, there is no doubt about that — writing, by far."

evenings playing bridge or serving on committees, or, when the weather was nice, working in his garden. His conversation, outside of his children, dealt with sports, the behavior of the market, or local affairs, frequently those of the Presbyterian Church, of which he was a deacon.

Mr. Parkinson's views on public affairs were considered entirely sound and his membership in the Presbyterian Church was of a piece with his general solidity. He did not walk with God — he would have been as likely to walk with John L. Lewis — but he regarded the Presbyterian Church as the sort of institution to which a man like himself should belong. He even had a certain affectionate regard for Dr. Mason, the pastor, who was suspected of being a socialist and who, according to Mr. Parkinson, sometimes talked "like a chump."

Mr. Parkinson played golf moderately well, was a popular, though rarely boisterous, member of the locker-room gang, paid for the drinks cheerfully when he lost, and gloated a little when he won.

2

THERE was no reason at all to associate Mr. Parkinson with Padraic O'Connor. O'Connor's vogue has declined sharply in recent years and I find that a good many people, even among the reasonably well informed, don't know who he was, but in his day he enjoyed a status which poets rarely attain in America, that of being at the same time a favorite of the literati and popular with the larger reading public. He made his first appearance with *Chants from the Gaelic*. The volume was brought out in a small edition by Chisholm and Stevenson and got rather a good reception from the critics.

It was characterized by a tone that was lyrical and even a little wild, coupled with an astonishingly conservative regularity in technique. Yet the poems never gave the impression of being mere exercises in ingenuity as technically skillful verse is likely to do. There was something hauntingly elegiac about them, particularly those which appeared in the volume entitled *As on a Darkling Plain*. They were simple as Yeats and Housman are simple — with a simplicity directed by an unobtrusive but very real sophistication.

O'Connor hasn't lasted so well as Yeats and Housman, and I can only infer from this that there was something a little commonplace in his lyricism, but certainly no one thought so during the period of his popularity. This "fresh, untrammelled singer" caught the fancy of the public as well as that of the critics. All of his volumes enjoyed substantial sales,

not comparable of course to those enjoyed at the time by the historical novels which rolled off the presses like Curtiss-Wright engines, but very good sales for verse.

It was natural that the public should want to know something about the poet, and inevitable that its interest in him should increase when it transpired that Padraic O'Connor was a pseudonym and that, with the exception of three or four editors at Chisholm and Stevenson, no one knew who he was. The Chisholm and Stevenson people were sworn to secrecy, which they maintained for something like a quarter of a century. During that time O'Connor published five volumes of verse.

After twenty-five years someone found out that Mr. Parkinson was Padraic O'Connor. How the secret got out will probably never be known. One of the New York papers printed it first and it was copied all over the country. The nation was astounded to learn that its favorite lyric poet was an actuary with a good income and a middle-class family in a suburb. Mr. Parkinson became a celebrity for a time — as long as it's possible for anyone who is not a criminal, a movie actor, an athlete, or a freak to be a celebrity in America, that is, about two weeks. During those two weeks he was interviewed in his office, offered substantial fees by syndicates to write his life story, invited to lecture at a number of universities, photographed on his front porch with Mrs. Parkinson, Bob, and Priscilla, and again on the links addressing a mashie shot in a rather difficult lie. This last was the only occasion on which he betrayed irritation during his brief spell in the limelight.

It was suggested at the time that Chisholm and Stevenson had deliberately let the secret out to stimulate a fading interest in O'Connor and revive his sales. I mentioned this some years later to an executive of the firm. He was not one of those who had been in on the secret but he was "morally certain" that none of the men entrusted with it had given it away.

"One of them may have let it out inadvertently," he told me, "but disabuse yourself of the notion that it was a publicity stunt. This talk about stimulating a 'fading' interest in O'Connor is bunk. Actually it had just the opposite effect. It stimulated interest out there in your town where everybody knew Parkinson, and in a few other commuter towns in Jersey, Long Island, and Westchester. But in the rest of the country sales dropped."

"How do you account for that?" I asked.

"Easily. There's a streak of romanticism in a lot of people who read poetry — even contemporary poetry. The firm never tried to capitalize on the

romantic aspect of O'Connor — we only used the name because Parkinson insisted on it and we liked the stuff well enough to print it anyway — but there's no denying it helped sales. People used to imagine him roosting in solitude on a crag in pantheistic contemplation of earth and heaven, or shooting it out with the English during the troubles. I tell you it was a shock to learn that he was a middle-class suburbanite who spent his spare time playing golf and had a boy at Amherst and a girl at Smith. And an actuary at that!"

So the source of the story was and is a mystery, but once it was out no attempt was made to deny it. After a few weeks it seemed to make little difference. Public interest, which in any case would not have survived the World Series, was diverted by a killing of peculiar ferocity in Chicago and Mr. Parkinson was left alone to go back to golf, gardening, and Presbyterian committees.

There is no doubt that this is what Mr. Parkinson wanted. He had not used a pseudonym out of modesty but from a sincere desire to avoid the life that was expected of a poet. In France, where an outstanding poet becomes a senator if he lives long enough, he might have indulged his talent for letters while working in an office, without any sense of incongruity, but in an English-speaking country this would have been difficult. A poet is expected to live a poet's life, and while no one seems to know exactly what this is, working as an actuary in an insurance company is assuredly one thing it is not. Mr. Parkinson had solved the problem by creating Padraic O'Connor as an *alter ego* and keeping his two personalities entirely separate. Once the cat was out of the bag it was no use expecting his neighbors to keep them separate. The rest of the country could forget the affair and did, but to our village Mr. Parkinson would never be the same again.

3

MY FIRST hint of the change came when I learned that at the annual elections of the Presbyterian Church, Mr. Parkinson had lost the chairmanship of the Finance Committee, which he had held for a number of years. The church reaction to the disclosure had been mixed. In general the younger members were pleased, if startled, while Dr. Mason, a standard twentieth-century Protestant divine who read Goethe and Dostoevski with reverence and Luther and Calvin with horror, was delighted.

Among the older people most of the women and practically all of the men were upset. There were two quite distinct reasons for their reaction. One

group, composed largely of women, objected to the poems on doctrinal grounds. I have said that the elegiac note bulked large in O'Connor's work. Certainly there is nothing shocking about this, and without it we should have very little poetry indeed. But it did not seem proper to some of the members of Mr. Parkinson's church that he should support in print the view that the death of the body is the end of life.

Whatever one's views on theology, it was impossible not to respect these ladies for clear thinking. They knew what they believed, they read what Mr. Parkinson had written, and recognized that the two were not the same. They perceived that he was not Presbyterian but a pagan. On the other hand, it was hard to feel anything like the same respect for the other group, largely masculine, whose objections were not theological at all. Their misgivings about Mr. Parkinson sprang entirely from the conviction that a poet must be rather an unsound person. Although they had all said more than once that "old Park" was extremely able in handling money, as he undoubtedly was, they now became obsessed with the idea that if he had charge of the church funds, he would spend them on "vague experiments." Needless to say, the chairman of the Finance Committee was in no sense "in charge" of the church funds but this consideration carried little weight. The change resulted in no modification at all in the church's fiscal policy but seriously hurt Mr. Parkinson's feelings.

I do not wish to give the impression that our village reacted to Mr. Parkinson's newly discovered eminence with hostility. People liked him as much as ever but they regarded him now as something extraordinary. He no longer seemed to fit into the commuting crowd. He still sat out on the upper deck of the ferry and looked just like everybody else, but the attorneys, bankers, and investment brokers who had been his companions in the past obviously felt a little uneasy in his presence. He began to stand more often by himself on the station platform and to clutch his *Times* almost defensively. I could see that he was far from happy. Why he should have opened his heart to me, twenty-five years his junior and hardly more than an acquaintance, I don't know. Perhaps because I was a dabbler in the arts myself, he thought I would be sympathetic, but more probably it was just an accident of time and circumstance.

I had worked late one night and reached Jersey City too late for the 10.45. There was nothing to do but wait for the 11.30. The close atmosphere of the waiting room was even less inviting than usual, so I drifted into the bar and had a drink.

After the first one Mr. Parkinson came in. It was unusual that he should be going home so late but he explained that he had been dragged to a "damned pompous lecture" at the Town Hall. We killed the time together with a few drinks until we could get on the 11.30. At that hour the standards of commuter behavior called for us either to fall asleep or disappear behind our papers and refrain from speaking to one another during the ride. It was probably the drinks that diverted us from this eminently sensible procedure.

4

THROUGHOUT the early part of the ride I experienced a sense of expectancy. Mr. Parkinson was in an unusual mood, for he had not talked about his children at all. I was waiting for I don't quite know what — some rending of the veil, I suppose. It seems absurd now that I anticipated a prophetic utterance from the poet which I had never expected from the actuary, but it is exactly the sort of notion a young man gets and I make no apology for it. The day had been close and oppressive but toward evening it had begun to clear and now a full moon lit the Hackensack meadows with a pale brilliance. Even through the dirt-encrusted windows of the coach the scene was a lovely one and I could see that it was affecting Mr. Parkinson in an unusual way.

"These meadows present a spectacle of extraordinary beauty at night," he said at last. "Even during the day, when their natural sweep and loveliness are disfigured by boxcars and other ungracious reminders of the presence of man, they are not without their attraction. I am continually baffled by people from the South and West who have made a brief trip through New Jersey and see fit to regard it as an eyesore for the rest of their lives. Aside from the extreme provincialism of their assumption that they have seen all of the state when they have crossed the meadows, I am perplexed by their failure to see the beauty of the meadows themselves. 'Dull would he be of soul who could pass by a sight so touching in its majesty.'"

"That's true," I said, feeling ridiculously anticlimactical. Mr. Parkinson seemed scarcely to hear me. He was peering at the scene with that gimlet-like air of concentration which is the expression of one who sees the natural world through the almost opaque windows of an Erie coach. "I'd miss it if I had to leave it," he murmured.

Something in Mr. Parkinson's tone startled me. "You're not thinking of leaving?" I asked quickly.

"As a matter of fact, I am."

I was sufficiently flabbergasted to say nothing.

It may be, as frequently claimed, that the suburbanite has no roots. In that case, I don't know what keeps him in place, unless it's just inertia. Sometimes young folks move into the city because they can't afford suburban life, and older people may retire to California or Florida, but in all my years in the suburbs I had never heard of a man of Mr. Parkinson's age moving away of his own accord.

"I don't fit in here any more," Mr. Parkinson added bitterly. "Ever since they found out about those damned poems they won't accept me."

"You shouldn't feel that way," I told him. "People don't dislike poets. They joke about them a lot but they don't dislike them."

"Of course they don't dislike them," said Mr. Parkinson. "They don't take them seriously enough to dislike them. They just insist on regarding them as wayward and eccentric. They expect a poet to have all kinds of weird attitudes and they won't treat him as they treat people whom they consider their 'own kind.' Some poets live and even thrive in spiritual solitude but I can't. It probably seems ridiculous to you — you young fellows are always making fun of the bourgeoisie — but I really like to play golf."

"So do I. There's nothing shameful about it."

"Of course there isn't," he snapped, "but nobody wants to play with me any more. It's taken twenty-five years to make a place for myself, and one newspaper edition wiped it out. They even think I'm a New Dealer."

I couldn't help smiling. Mr. Parkinson was not one of the noisy Roosevelt-haters but he had always held the opinions expected of a suburbanite.

"You think it's funny," he said. "You'll find out that a government can't run forever on crazy experiments and deficit financing."

The conversation had taken on an oddly contrapuntal quality as though I were talking to the poet and the actuary at the same time. The themes did not alternate but ran along together and it took a good ear to follow them.

As we were pulling into Rutherford at this point, I thought it appropriate to mention that William Carlos Williams, a rather well-known poet at that time, was a practicing physician there. This suggested that it was possible for a poet to live in the suburbs and enjoy the respect of his neighbors.

"Williams is different," Mr. Parkinson replied. "He's *avant-garde*. I don't mean that I don't like his stuff, because frequently I do, but it's so far off the beam from the suburban point of view that it's probably looked on as a harmless eccentricity, not so very different from collecting postage stamps or beer bottle caps."

"If I'd written like Williams or some of those other very modern fellows, I'd have gotten away with it all right. But I couldn't write that way. Or if I'd gone to the other extreme and written horrible jingles about mother and hard work like Edgar Guest, that would have been all right too. I'd have been named poet laureate of the village and expected to turn out odes to commemorate Lincoln's birthday, the annual boy scout rally, and things of that sort. My trouble is that I've stuck to the traditions of English poetry. I've never been obscure and I've tried not to be corny. I've tried to put honest emotions into graceful and melodious verse. That's the traditional function of the poet, and our neighbors know just enough about it to distrust it. It makes them uneasy to have someone like Shelley or Swinburne in town."

I almost laughed aloud. "But you're not like Shelley or Swinburne, Mr. Parkinson," I protested, growing more and more puzzled as to just how seriously all this should be taken.

"Of course I'm not. And I'm not a New Dealer either. But they all know what a poet is and I'm expected to fit the picture. I used to have to behave the way people thought an actuary should behave. It wasn't very hard for me, so I became a successful and respected citizen. Now I have to behave like a poet and I can't do it. Why, I can't even talk about business any more. Everyone on the 7.51 used to be glad to get my opinion. They used to say: 'Old Park knows his stuff.'" (I had heard my father say just that more than once.) "Now I'm supposed to 'wander lonely as a cloud.'"

"Well, Dr. Mason is pleased with you anyway," I said fatuously.

"Good Lord, that's the worst of it. He wants me to 'occupy the pulpit' at a regular Sunday service. Wouldn't I feel like an idiot preaching a sermon! Mason says that poets are closer to God than ministers are. Did you ever hear such damn fool talk?"

I had frequently heard such damn fool talk but saw no point in saying so. Instead I asked him how he had come to develop his "dual nature."

"I haven't got a dual nature," he replied almost desperately. "True, I've always loved poetry but it never made me an eccentric and I certainly never had any notion of making my living out of it. When I got out of college I was offered a chance to learn to be an actuary. I was quick at figures and I liked playing around with them, so I took it. I'm with the same company today. For the first few years I lived in Greenwich Village and spent a lot of my evenings

with other poetry lovers. I wrote *Chants from the Gaelic* during those years. When I married Ethel it seemed natural to move out to the suburbs since she preferred that kind of life, and I agreed it would be better for bringing up a family. But I soon saw that I'd have to change my character to get along. Suburbanites expect you to fit their pattern, you know."

I said I knew.

"Well, *Chants from the Gaelic* had already been shown to an editor at Chisholm and Stevenson and he had liked it. Naturally a book of verse didn't jibe with my new character, so I asked the firm if they'd be willing to publish it under another name. They had no objection and that's how Padraic O'Connor got started. It was a Jekyll and Hyde existence, I suppose, but O'Connor behaved better than Hyde. He never erupted into my everyday life, and because I really liked my job and playing golf and all that, it wasn't very difficult to settle down and be what I was expected to be. Now I'm expected to be a poet and it's impossible. Besides, think how humiliated Bob and Priscilla would be at college if their father had no responsible position in the community but only wrote verses."

I was recently enough out of college myself to feel sure that, with some of their contemporaries at least, such a father would afford Bob and Priscilla a certain prestige, but I didn't say so. Mr. Parkinson had offered convincing proof that he was in reality a suburbanite by this automatic assumption that everyone would see the thing as he saw it.

"So now Ethel and I are thinking of moving out," he went on mournfully. "Maybe in some other town people wouldn't connect me with O'Connor at all."

We were pulling into the station, so I tried to bring the conversation to a close on a jocular note.

"It seems to me," I said, "that what you had better do is resign from your job and take over the editorship of a literary journal. You could get an apartment in the city where you could entertain poets and painters and people of that sort. Your social life would not be dull in the winter when publishers' teas and cocktail parties are in full swing, and you could probably lecture at the Bread Loaf School in the summer."

"Good God!" Mr. Parkinson exclaimed in a stricken voice, "do you think I might have to do that?"

He looked so dejected as he walked down the station platform that I had an impulse to run after him and assure him that I had only meant it as a joke. I don't suppose it would have done any good if I had.

THE MAN WHO RESCUED "THE CAPTAIN"

Letters edited by

ALICE SUMNER LE DUC

In the *Atlantic* for December, 1862, first appeared Oliver Wendell Holmes's "My Hunt after 'The Captain.'" It will be remembered that young Captain Holmes was first thought to have been mortally wounded at the Battle of Antietam. After examination on the field, he was taken care of by a brother officer, Captain William G. Le Duc, who fed him opium and eventually found him a bed in the near-by village. Out of this emergency grew a friendship between General Le Duc and the Holmeses, and the correspondence which follows. — THE EDITOR

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES tells us, in his narrative entitled "My Hunt after 'The Captain,'" that when he received the telegram which told him of his son's wound and his whereabouts, and which he quotes as follows: "Captain H—— wounded shot through the neck thought not mortal at Keedysville William G. Leduc," one of his first reflections — his momentary, interjectional reflection — was "Leduc? Leduc? Don't remember that name." Then he thought no more about "Leduc," but about starting on what was to be a protracted search for his son.

Recent examination of our family papers brought to light some correspondence between my father, General William Gates Le Duc, and the Holmeses, both father and son. My father, an early Minnesota pioneer — with an Ohio as well as a New England background — and a volunteer in the Union Army, had long been an enthusiastic admirer of Holmes's work. And while, with his tireless energy and ready helpfulness, he would gladly have rendered to any other man the service he rendered to young Holmes, it must have given him an especial satisfaction to assist the son of the author who had given him so much enduring pleasure.

From the unpublished volume of recollections that my father has left to his family I extract his brief account of what he was able to do for Captain Holmes, whom he found unattended just after the battle of Antietam, September 17, 1862: —

"I had taken Captain O. W. Holmes, Jr., in charge. A surgeon, who had looked at his wound and found that the ball had entered his neck, shook his head when I urged him to give attention to Holmes, and said his duty was to try to save those

who had a chance of recovery — that Holmes had none.

"Then I said: 'Tell me what to do for him.'

"'Wash off the blood, plug up the wound with lint, and give him this pill of opium' — handing me a little brown pill — 'and have him keep quiet.'

"I put my arm around him, and got him into the first vacant house [that is, not occupied by soldiers] I came to, and told the woman of the house to bring down the softest bed she had, as there was no bed on the lower floor, and I thought it better for him to be on the ground floor; and when she objected to bringing down any of her feather beds, I told her I would take the place for a hospital, and turn the family out; this threat was sufficient, and the good feather bed was made ready on the floor, and I washed and bandaged the wound, and gave the pill, and left him in care of the family. While fixing him up, and washing the wound, I noticed that the ball had struck the middle seam of his coat squarely, and was amazed at his escape from instant death, but as he seemed cheerful, and amused himself with jokes, saying: 'Shot in the neck [Army slang for being drunk] — disgraceful for a temperance man!' and: 'I'm glad it's not a case for amputation, for I don't think you'd be equal to it, Le Duc,' and: 'Say, Le Duc, do you think it will be good for a ninety-day leave?' I thought possibly the surgeon was wrong, and that the boy's vitality might carry him through. So, in making up my telegram to send to his father, Doctor Holmes — lecturer on anatomy in Harvard Medical School — I ran it over mentally in several ways, and finally decided on: 'Captain wounded, shot through the neck, thought to be not mortal' and sent it to Doctor Holmes, Boston."

Doctor Holmes tells us he considered, after reading the telegraphic message, that "thought not mortal" was better than "not thought mortal" would have been; and, with this more hopeful arrangement of the three words in his mind by way of encouragement, he went on the journey of which the vicissitudes and anxieties are known to us through his *Atlantic Monthly* story, first published in the issue of December, 1862.

Here is the earliest of Doctor Holmes's letters to my father: —

BOSTON, Nov. 21st, 1862

Lt. Colonel Wm. G. Le Duc
Chief Quartermaster 11th Army Corps
Washington, D.C.

MY DEAR SIR: —

Your letter to my son was opened by his mother after his departure for the field of action, which I hope he has reached before this time. As she read it to me, I shall make bold to answer it briefly. In the first place the Captain is, or was when he went, in excellent condition. His wound has been for some time entirely healed and has left nothing except some neuralgic pains which are disappearing, and I think will quit him entirely in due time.

In the second place I wish to express to you personally my deep sense of obligation for the extraordinary promptitude with which you notified me on the very night of the great battle that he was wounded, and how, and where he was, as well as for your kind attentions to him, for which he and all of us shall always be grateful. I am sure that you must be one of those men who do their duty and more than their duty, as if it were, as it no doubt has become, their pleasure. It rejoices me therefore to hear that you have risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and if you go on as you seem to have begun, I do not see where you will stop until you wear your buttons in platoons and have Colonels under you. Neither do I think any the worse of you for confessing a slight fancy for some of my own literary attempts. In fact I like you all the better for that weakness, and if I only knew how to get one of my little "blue and golds" to you with any reasonable certainty I would send you one of my author's copies with great delight — and will do it whenever I find what seems a sure channel.

My Captain was at Washington when I last heard of him, en route for camp which he had, or has, as much trouble in finding as I had in finding him — as you may see by the last *Atlantic Monthly* if that periodical falls within your range of vision.

Renewing my very sincere thanks to you, and re-

minding you that the little book shall come whenever you will tell me how it shall come, I am

Yours very sincerely,

O. W. HOLMES

My father, wishing to give the pleasure of the gift thus offered to the eldest of his little girls, — who had been enthusiastically memorizing and reciting the poems, — wrote, in reply to this letter, asking that the book be sent to her instead of to himself. The answer to this request follows, written, as are all the letters of this period from Doctor Holmes, on most ladylike stationery, glazed, and with "21 Charles St." in raised letters at the top of the sheet, which is small, as is the envelope — the latter having a fancifully curved edge to its flap, on which an ornamental Old English *H* is embossed.

BOSTON, Dec. 26th, 1862

MY DEAR SIR: —

I have just sent a copy of my Poems, as you requested, to your daughter at Mt. Vernon, Ohio. It ought to have been in season for Christmas — it will be in time for New Year. I send you one of my photographs to remind you that I remember your kind offices with the gratitude I have before tried to express to you.

Yours very truly,

O. W. HOLMES

My mother, with her children, was staying at Mt. Vernon, Ohio, with her own family during the war. Doubtless my father sent Doctor Holmes a letter of thanks for the little book — which had been joyfully received by my eldest sister, and which is still properly treasured — as soon as he heard of its arrival. A letter written by my mother at the time reports that "a pretty letter" had been written by the little girl to the poet when the book reached her. Doctor Holmes wrote again to my father in January: —

BOSTON, Jan. 11th, 1863

MY DEAR SIR: —

Two successive trips, the first to New York, the second to Philadelphia, have used up the last fortnight, and I have consequently a heap of unanswered letters, of which I take yours first for various reasons — among the rest its great vivacity and interest, and the fact that I forgot to enclose the portrait I promised. I think the omission occurred to me too late, but I forgot all about it in the hurry of my two visits. I will repair it this time. . . .

My second visit — to Philadelphia — was to see my Captain, who was down with bad dysentery at one time and was sent to hospital to get rid of the diarrhea and other troubles which remain. I found

him looking better than some accounts I had had led me to fear, and in good spirits as he always is when in tolerable bodily condition. He is paying board at Camac's Woods Hospital, but really staying at Mr. Hallewell's, which is the best hospital in the world, as General Dana, Colonel Palfrey, and my son are ready to swear. I suppose he will go back to camp in the course of a week or two. He returned last time before his leave of absence had expired — perhaps too soon, for he was taken sick before long. However, if he had not been sick, he would very likely have been shot at Fredericksburg, which was the first battle of his regiment he ever missed.

I can't tell you how much your letter pleased me — so perfectly real and life-like. I got a better idea of camp life from it than from anything I have yet read — one aspect of camp life, that is, with all its accidents, interruptions, intrusions. You could not have written half so well but for the very things which seemed to conspire against your writing at all. The "letter written under difficulties" is a model letter, so artless that it becomes thoroughly artistic. I will tell you what it suggests, of course in a slighter way — I mean Church's 5½ hour picture of Niagara which I saw at Goupil's the other day. Just as that gets the froth and scramble of the waters, so your letter dashed off in that sudden way has all the splash and bubble of active life. . . .

Don't scold me because I am not better looking — I think my boy is a great improvement on the original pattern. I hope I shall have the pleasure of taking you by the hand some day and saying to you how many thanks you deserve for your kindness and interest in me and him.

Very sincerely yours,

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

BOSTON, July 27th, 1863

MY DEAR CAPTAIN — COLONEL: —

My address — Oration, rather — is going through the press, and as soon as it is delivered to me you shall have a copy. In the meantime I send you a tolerably correct newspaper copy, which, if you have eyes and patience, you may worry through before you get the other. The "Captain" is at home, with a bullet-hole in his os calcis, *vulgo* heel, but doing well enough, only that he is lame. He would send you a message I don't doubt, only he is upstairs doing the polite to some lady visitors.

Thank you for sending for my Oration. If you don't get the pamphlet copy within a week or two, write again and I will try again to reach you with it.

Very truly,

Your obliged friend,

O. W. HOLMES

There is a brief note from the Captain, undated, written in a bold hand, with a much heavier pen than his father used: —

DEAR COLONEL: —

I owe you many apologies for my neglect in not paying my lawful debts sooner. I might offer you excuses, but I won't, and will own up to my ingratitude, and beg you to forgive me. I am still at home with [wound] No. 3, and don't find it a great hardship.

With renewed thanks for your kindness to me, I am

Yours sincerely,

O. W. HOLMES

The two following letters, written by my father to Doctor Holmes, were returned to him many years later by Doctor Holmes's secretary.

CATLETT'S STA., VA., Aug. 17, 1863

MY DEAR DOCTOR: —

A few days since, as I was sitting in my tent, a little old man came by whose peculiarities attracted everybody's attention. His hat had been a silk stovepipe tile; it was now sadly worn, bruised, and battered, cracked around the top, the rim partly detached, — utterly worn out. The coat was of bombazine or Preacher's cloth — *drap d'été* or whatever it is called by the trade — worn and rent and mended and split like a locust on the back, and drawn together and darned as well as might be over the stooped shoulders of the little old man. His pantaloons of the same material, but split and sewed up in the crotch until the crotch had gotten half way to his knees. His shoes are — well, no matter, I learned that they are not his — they were borrowed — so I had a pair of shoes put in the cart for him. The cart in which he came was equally a curiosity with himself. A wretched anatomy of a half-grown, half-starved horse, in a light road cart with a high body. His face had a childish simplicity, but was evidently a scholar's face, and expressive; and I was not surprised to learn that he was a D.D., and as full of learning as an egg is of meat. It was a surprise and pleasure to talk with the little old man, whose memory is so remarkable, and, although a rebel, yet he evidently is not actually so much a rebel as he seems in his notes to your oration. I was reading your oration when he called upon me. He remarked that he had not seen a new book or magazine or pamphlet for a long time, but that he was forced to confine himself to his own old books and to employ his time by writing a history of his times.

His family consists of Wife and two daughters, one 19 and one 17. The elder daughter reads readily

7 languages and speaks fluently 5, so I am told. The younger is also a scholar. He married one of the numerous and wealthy Carter family, and until the war they have been rich; they are now bordering on starvation — as indeed are all the people left in this neighborhood.

Since commencing this letter I have been called upon by a Miss Marsteller, who brought a few pats of sour curds, and a jug or two of milk, and cucumbers to the Union soldiers, . . . begging for permission to purchase a little sugar or coffee or flour. If they take the oath of allegiance they may buy of the Commission — 5 day rations at one time.

Well, the old man wanted something to read. I loaned him your oration, with the understanding that he should write such notes upon it, as he read it, as the oration suggested, and send them to me, which he has done. I don't know whether the criticism will interest you enough to read it — but I send it, with the request that it be remailed to me, as I wish to put it among my files of remembrances of the war.

Yours truly,

WM. G. LE DUC

On the margin of the preceding letter, in Doctor Holmes's delicate hand, written very minutely, is the notation: "Le Duc Wm G. Catlett's Station Va. A very poor & learned clergyman."

LOOKOUT VALLEY, *April 29, 1864*

MY DEAR DOCTOR: —

On looking over and sorting out my papers previous to marching from this place where we have been all winter, I find a package which I supposed had gone to you long since. I send it now thinking it may interest you a little, and enclose stamps to cover the postage to Mt. Vernon, Ohio, to which place I beg you to direct it after you shall have done with it. Direct to Mrs. Wm. G. Le Duc — Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

Be pleased to present my compliments to "the Captain" when you write him. I heard before leaving Va. that he was killed at Gettysburg, but an officer of the 33rd Mass., which Reg. is in this command, assures me it is not so. I rejoice to hear it, and hope he may live through this cursed war, and to the end of a long life reap the honor of his gallantry and patriotism.

I am with the old commander of the Army of the Potomac, Gen. Hooker, who is the ablest military man I have yet seen and served with. Be assured of that. You know that Broadwick and Hooker made California a free state. His whole heart is in this matter, hence the Copperheads revile and abuse him; he is a very able military man, hence ambitious

men envy and traduce him — or wink at it. He is honorable and high-minded and speaks his mind freely, hence men who don't understand him are captious and fault-finding. He is of fair complexion and rosy cheeks, and sometimes hesitates in his choice of words, hence the suspicious are certain he is a drunkard. I believe it is generally conceded by those of his friends in the states who don't know him personally that he is intemperate, and perhaps even you will be astonished to learn that Gen. Hooker is a very temperate man. I have had opportunities of intimate knowledge for many months, and I assure you that at no time and under no circumstances have I known him to indulge in liquor or wines to excess. He is a gentleman, and par excellence a Soldier. But I am scrawling verbosely and will quit, subscribing myself truly your friend,

WM. G. LE DUC

On the margin of this letter Doctor Holmes has written — again very minutely — "Le Duc Wm. G. Head Quars 20th Army Corps, Lookout Valley. Interesting about Genl. Hooker."

2

IN 1878 Doctor Holmes wrote the following letter, having received one from my father which I fancy contained an invitation to some meeting that had to do with agriculture, and which had been accompanied by a present of some American-grown tea. My father was at that time at the head of the Department of Agriculture in Washington, and enthusiastically interested in his work.

"BEVERLY FARMS," MASS., *Aug. 15th, 1878*

DEAR MR. LE DUC: —

I do not at this moment remember whether I ought to address you as General or by any other military title, but you will pardon my ignorance.

My special claim to the invitation you send me is obviously due to the fact that I write from the place known as Beverly Farms. Our farming consists of several red-painted tubs of flowers, with three small beds of ditto, in which we raise a crop of nasturtium and geranium blossoms entirely for domestic consumption. I was once the owner of a large farm in which I used to sow dollars and dimes broadcast, and raise nickels in considerable number when the season was favorable. But I have forgotten most of what I then knew, and could hardly tell a beet from a carrot, or know a field of buckwheat in flower, when I was standing to the leeward of it, from a — well no matter what I might very probably confound it with.

I thank you a thousand times for the polite invitation, but I never go anywhere, I may say, except when I have to hunt up one of my boys gone on a shooting excursion, as you may remember I once had to.

As to the tea. I have hopes for the future, and after we have opened that box you were kind enough to send, I have no doubt that I shall believe in the vinous possibilities of the country — unless there is a general law passed against the process of fermentation.

Very truly yours,

O. W. HOLMES

The following delightful letter from Mr. H. O. Houghton, though not strictly a Holmes letter, bears on my subject:—

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO., PUBLISHERS

Successors to

J. R. OSGOOD & CO. AND HURD & HOUGHTON

BOSTON, Oct. 27, 1880

MY DEAR GEN. LE DUC:—

I have your two favors, the first complimentary to Dr. Holmes, the second supplementary to Mr. Longfellow. Dr. Holmes called just after I received the first, and I showed it to him, and he seemed much pleased. He always speaks of your telegram conveying the intelligence of the wounding of his son.

I have not shown your second letter to Mr. Longfellow, but I have [to] one member of my family, my eldest daughter, who seems to agree with you. But, of course, I do not. There are too many solid returns from the sale of his Poetry for me to regard it as froth. I respect, however, an honest opinion, even if it does not accord with my interests.

I trust you will succeed in your sugar experiments. When this country is able to supply all its own wants within its own domains, then it can afford to be generous to the rest of the world.

I was sorry to have missed your call when you were in Boston, and am

Yours very truly,

H. O. HOUGHTON

BEVERLY FARMS, July 2, 1881

DEAR GENERAL LE DUC:—

We have just got fixed up for the season in the country, and I am not able to report on the tea as yet, having brought so much work with me that I have not been able to look over my letters and pamphlets until now.

I shall carefully study your directions and refer the question to my tea-drinking lady-household, who, I think, are rather prejudiced in favor of the

China kind which they have got used to, and to certain particular kinds of that.

If I can get a favorable report from them I shall be very happy to render it, but I do not want to force them or hurry them into an opinion, and if they stick to their old-fashioned notions I don't think I shall say anything about it.

I thank you not only for putting me on the tea jury, but for the kind words about my writings. I hope they have made some few persons a little more cheerful, a little wiser, or less foolish at any rate, and nobody any worse. . . .

Yours very sincerely,

O. W. HOLMES

BEVERLY FARMS, MASS. Aug. 3d 1881

MY DEAR SIR:—

I hope you got my letter acknowledging the receipt of the tea, and promising to tell you how we liked it — *if* we liked it.

The Parlor Committee, Mrs. H——, my daughter (Mrs. Sargent), and myself report.

C too astringent — resembling green tea.

B less astringent, better liked.

A a good deal like C.

On the whole a decided improvement over last year's specimens. But of course when put in competition with the expensive teas selected because they suit our special taste, it could hardly be expected that they would suit the fancy of tasters accustomed to their own chosen flavors in the imported leaves.

The report from the kitchen was not unlike that from the parlor. B and C were considered the best — not much difference. These teas less like "herbs" than last year's. They do not pretend to like any of them as well as the imported tea we give them.

All such trials do not prove what would be the verdict in the long run, for, as you know, people have to get used to many flavors before they can really like them. When American teas come into the market they will soon find their place in the scale of value, and it seems quite likely that repeated experiments will bring out varieties superior to any yet obtained, and perhaps equal to those of the countries where the plant has been long acclimated.

I thank you for the compliment you pay my writings. It adds a flavor to the tea you send me. . . .

Very truly yours,

O. W. HOLMES

3

THE following letter appears to have been written after a flying visit my father made to Boston in

1898. At this time Judge Holmes's writing was less easily read than in his earlier years, and the date, as he wrote it, might be Jan. 7, or might be June 7, or — a little less probably — even March 7. I cannot be at all sure about it, but, January being first in the procession of the months, I assume, arbitrarily, that "Jan. 7" is correct, though I think it is quite as likely to have been June.

The fourteenth word in the text of this letter begins with *b*. That is quite certain. The next letter might be *a* or *o*, but I have a slight suspicion that it is *a*. Of the third letter I can only say that it would be a perfect *i* if there were a dot over it — but there is not. After this there is a longish, rather horizontal but curved mark, resembling no letter whatever in our alphabet. I fancied this word might be *bad* because, while it did not look like *bad*, neither did it look like anything else, but in the middle of the night, inspiration told me that it was *base*, and I have so transcribed it.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT
COURT HOUSE, BOSTON

Jan. 7, 1898

DEAR GENERAL: —

I am in despair to have missed you, and I think it was base conduct to give me so slim a chance. I did not get home till your train was starting. I would have given much to shake your dear old hand again, and so would Mrs. Holmes. It is pleasant to get such a cheerful-sounding line from you. I think the old fighters keep a pretty good front against the enemy.

Affly yours,

O. W. HOLMES

Three years later my father was again in Boston, this time for several days, and saw the Holmeses. Portions of his letters to my mother during these days follow, together with two notes from Judge Holmes: —

BOSTON, Saturday, Dec. 28, 1901
5 o'clock — dark

DEAR MARY: —

I arrived here an hour ago, and determined to go around to the old Boston Museum, where we, a long time ago, went to hear Adelaide Phillips and Wm. Warren, and the others, and for the memory of things and times past and gone I bought a ticket, and will see what is to be seen. In looking up the old place I passed by several low variety shows so called — fat women, snakes, vulgar pictures, and such things advertised in the street as in the olden time would have sent them all to the back bay, or to

prison. Boston streets never seemed so crooked and mean, and the pavements so narrow. . . .

I have mailed my card to Judge Holmes and suppose he will get it tomorrow morning sometime, unless there is no Sunday delivery of mail.

Now I will go down and see what kind of sea food can be had, and then to the theater at eight o'clock. . . .

WM. G. LE DUC

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT
COURT HOUSE, BOSTON

Dec. 30, 1901

MY DEAR GENERAL: —

Welcome to Boston. Will you meet me at the ladies' dining room at Parker's today at 1½, or other such hour as you prefer, and lunch with me — then I can learn your plans, and how long you are to be here.

Sincerely yours,

O. W. HOLMES

Dec. 31, 1901

DEAR GENERAL: —

Will you dine with me at 296 Beacon St. next Saturday at 7¼? Also would you like me to ask the Governor for an invitation for you to the Inauguration on Thursday morning next?

Sincerely yours,

O. W. HOLMES

BOSTON, Jan. 3rd, 1902

DEAR MARY: —

As yesterday was the Inauguration day of the newly elected (it is his third term — they elect annually in Mass.) governor, and as at the request of the Chief Justice I was invited by the Governor to be present, and his secretary was instructed to see that I had a prominent place assigned me, and as the marshal had like instruction, and when he came out with the procession he assigned an officer of the Court to take me in charge, behind the Supreme Court I marched in, and was seated with them on the left of the Governor. . . . Chief Justice Holmes sent a message to me to say he wished me to join the Judges at lunch after the services — which I did, of course, with pleasure, and we went down to a place on or facing on the common, on the street we used to travel up from Winter Street, passing the old Church on the corner, not far from the Riverside publishing house — Houghton, Mifflin & Co. — and up to the top of one of those old houses — in fact in under the very roof; we found a pleasant dining room already filled, or nearly so, with people; however a place

was found for the Justices — Holmes and Mason, Lathrop, and Barker of the Supreme Court, and myself, as guest of the Chief Justice, at his right. Justice Barker seemed to be the Majordomo, and ordered what each one wished, and no one wanted more than a very light lunch in the middle of the day.

The Judges had all to go back to work, and I returned to my Hotel, where every attention is paid me since it was learned through the Messenger of the Supreme Court that Genl. Le Duc was stopping there — he who the Chief Justice says saved his life at the battle of Antietam — the manager and clerks and waiters have all caught on, and are alike attentive and deferential, which is all well enough until I find myself pointed out as a sort of White Elephant — an old fellow from an historical past, to be observed, and noted, and speculated upon and about. . . .

WM. G. LE DUC

BOSTON, Jan. 10th, 1902

DEAR MARY: —

The wretched weather here is too much for any white man, and I will flee from it by the train leaving here at 1 o'clock p.m. on the air line — if not today then tomorrow. . . . Lights in Hotel all lit up as is necessary although 10½ A.M. Rain, snow, fog, east wind, and no comfort. I have a letter from Prof. Shephard this morning about Teas. I wrote him to send Mrs. Holmes some tea. . . .

Here I have no one but the Holmeses, who live 'way off, and I have already called to say good-by to them. . . . The Judge proclaims that I saved his life at Antietam, and our parting last night was, well — affectionate, — two old soldiers of former times, expecting never to meet again. . . .

WM. G. LE DUC

The last of Justice Holmes's letters that I find, excepting one, was written in August of the following summer: —

BEVERLY FARMS, Aug. 19, 1902

DEAR GENERAL: —

Thank you for your kind words. I was sure of your kind thoughts beforehand. For you must feel the benevolence which the good Samaritan felt after he had poured in his oil and wine — or Papa Perichon in the French play after rescuing his daughter's lover from a crevasse. But it is a good deal more than that — for you have a generous heart, and are a faithful friend. My best wishes to you and yours in return.

Always sincerely yours,

O. W. HOLMES

Reading the foregoing letter taxed my father's powers somewhat, as the condition in which I find it shows. He took a pencil, and, as he read, wrote between the lines beneath each word its meaning when he had arrived at it — lest it should escape him again — in his own small and legible hand, but there were seven words that evidently defied him to the last, for those have nothing written under them. I have made them out, but I have been specially trained by correspondence with a lifelong friend who writes the worst hand in the civilized world. I can imagine the time and effort my father spent on those seven words, and his exasperation when he had to give them up in the end, for he never could see why people didn't write so that one could read what they wrote. Justice Holmes was sure to hear about it, and did hear about it, as may be seen by his reply: —

BEVERLY FARMS, September 7, 1902

My Dear General: —

MY. WIFE. RECEIVED. THE. TEA. AND. WROTE. TO. YOU. WE. HAVE. BEEN. DRINKING. AMERICAN. TEA. EVER. SINCE. I. AM. SORRY. YOU. CANNOT. READ. WRITING. IT. IS. A. GREAT. CONVENIENCE. AND. I. WOULD. LEARN. IF. I. WERE. YOU. RATHER. THAN. SARCE. AN. OLD. FRIEND. WHO. NEVERTHELESS. IS. SINCERELY. YOURS. IF. YOU. CAN. MAKE. OUT. HIS. NAME. — O. W. Holmes



THE ATLANTIC SERIAL

ONE FINE DAY

by MOLLIE PANTER-DOWNES

1

THE place was England, the time early morning. The clock in the hall struck eight. Stephen Marshall knew that it was right, for he had wound it up only last night, and that meant that in a few minutes he must go. He moved his shoulders irritably. Cup in hand, he was standing frowning out into the garden.

"Terrible, terrible," he repeated gloomily.

"But what can one do?" said Laura.

She got up from the breakfast table and joined him. Victoria, still seated, watched their familiar backs, curiously alike, her father's long and slim, her mother's long and slim. But there the resemblance ended. Her mother's hair was so curly, a mass of springing curls all over her head. Stephen's head was quite sleek, and right at the back, interesting discovery, there was a tiny thinnish patch under the hair. Victoria watched it, fascinated, as she chewed bacon toast.

"Voller's a shocking worker," Stephen was saying.

"He's too old, poor old darling," Laura said.

"It comes to the same thing. If Chandler could see it now — !"

Chandler could not, for he was dead in Holland. The gardener had died, ironically, in the gardener's paradise, the land of neatly regimented pink and azure and fleshy white blossoms. My man's good on roses, Stephen used to say to friends who motored down for lunch on Sundays before the war. He could hear himself saying it, leaning back in the deck chair as he squinted idly at the lovely creatures each in their separate compartments edged with box, Angèle Pernet like apricots, spicy Étoile de Hollande, the stout white matron Frau Karl Druschki,

An Englishwoman now in her late thirties, MOLLIE PANTER-DOWNES has been the *New Yorker's* correspondent in England since September, 1939. This is her first novel, a story of post-war England, which the *Atlantic* is happy to have the privilege of publishing — first in a somewhat reduced form as a serial, and then in book form in October under the Atlantic-Little, Brown imprint.

Shot Silk, the pale petal against the dark, the perfect buds proud among the shining leaves. The soil suits 'em, he would say, as though they sprang up like buttercups. And they would sit there, looking at the roses, talking idly, enjoying the hot sun — was it imagination that all the summer Sunday afternoons before the war had been hot? — until out from the house tripped Ethel or Violet, smart in a pretty uniform, to take away the coffee tray.

He swallowed the last mouthful of tea, still staring out of the window.

"It seems almost to bear a grudge," he said.

The garden's vitality was indeed monstrous and somehow alarming. The rose beds had disappeared in long grass. Since he came home, Stephen had dug a few free, but as fast as he cleared them the weeds blew in again relentlessly, twining, creeping, choking with nooses of fine bone-white fiber. Old Voller, coming up from the village of Wealding two evenings a week on his tricycle, slowly hanging up his jacket on a nail in the potting shed among the mice and onions, slowly blowing his nose in a red cotton square and getting his spade and creeping down the path — at the thought of his maddening slowness Stephen's shoulders squirmed irritably again. Old Voller was no match for the strength of seven practically unchecked years, when only Laura had been here to help him with a little muddling with a trowel now and then. The result was that a vegetable war to the death appeared to be on, green in tooth and claw. The flowers rampaged and ate each other, red-hot poker devouring lily, aster swallowing bergamot, rose gulping jasmine. Cannibals, assassins, they sat complacent with corners of green tendrils hanging from their jaws. The cutthroat bindweed slid up the hollyhock and neatly slipped the wire round its throat. The frilled poppy and the evening primrose seeded themselves everywhere, exulting in the death of Chandler.

The thought of so much to do and no one to do it often got between Stephen and his work in London,

where he was proceeding at this moment. Holding on at the telephone, he would doodle voracious caterpillars on his pad. Down the rain would hiss on the sooty tiles beneath his window, and he would think of the confounded green things shooting up, guzzling and growing like mad. Damn it, he would mutter, slamming down the papers on the table top.

"I thought in the middle of the night," he said, coming back to his chair, "couldn't we get the Cochranes' gardener along, now they're leaving, even if it's only for two or three evenings a week? Young Porter. I don't see why not. You might drop in and see if you can fix it, Laura, before somebody else snaps him up."

"Well, I'll try. Some time today I've got to go and look for Stuffy."

"Oh, she wasn't back this morning?" He glanced over at the basket in the corner.

"I'm sure she's gone off to the gypsy's dogs again on Barrow Down."

"Oh Lord," he groaned, "more puppies!"

2

STEPHEN picked up the telephone bill, which the postman had only just dropped on the mat with as lighthearted a smack as though it were a love letter. So many trunk calls — had they really had them? The awful total suggested that Laura spent the whole day putting in frantic calls to her family in Cornwall, but of course there was no check-up, none at all. Laura was incorrigible on the telephone, there was no denying it. She rambled, she paid no attention to three-minute time signals exploding in her ear. And through his mind shot the depressing thought that before the war, in the long, warm Sunday afternoon into which all that time seemed to have condensed when one looked back at it, he would not have had to worry about telephone bills and the paying of them. He looked at Laura across the table.

"You might," he said sharply, "have been a bit more careful."

He meant about keeping Stuffy shut in, or about the telephone, or about anything she chose to take it to mean. At the back of his mind he deplored his use of that uncivil, positively unpleasant tone to Laura before Victoria, who sat there stolidly eating, certainly paying no outward attention. He remembered the amiable truce of good manners which used to exist, apparently, between his own father and mother. If they were irritated with each other, they never showed it. If they ever fought, he and his

brother and sister were not permitted to witness the awful, the incredible battle. But it was quite impossible, he excused himself instantly, to keep up any such polite appearances in these days when the child was always with them, day and night, when no starched arm descended to remove her and give them a bit of a breathing space, when she must take her whack, so to speak, out of the great adult bowl of whatever happened to be on hand in the way of conversational hodgepodge. He glanced at her. She was staring out of the window, not listening anyway.

"Frightfully careless," he said coldly.

"I know," said Laura.

She sighed. She looked across the table at him, her forehead wrinkled. Suddenly everything began to get much better.

"Honor Farleigh rang up, and I ran in from the garden to answer the telephone. I quite forgot about Stuffy and the door."

"Well," he said, "it can't be helped."

He got up. Everything was suddenly, mysteriously better, as though the accumulated annoyance about the jungle of a garden, the telephone bill, Laura's bitch being allowed to sneak off and get herself in the family way again, had all come to a head and been lanced. The relief was really extraordinary. He came round the table and kissed Laura.

"I must go," he said, "I'm late."

What a morning! Later it would be very hot, but now the dew frosted the gray spikes of the pinks, the double syringa hung like a delicious white cloud in the pure air. The cat sat with its feet close together on the unmown grass, and suddenly, sticking out a stiff back leg, ran its mouth up and down as though playing a passage on the flute. Summer at last, thought Stephen, and about time, too. London would be an oven.

"If Voller turns up before I'm home," he said, "tell him to net the raspberries. We're going to lose the lot now the jays have got on to 'em."

He ruffled the mousy fair hairs which had escaped on the nape of Victoria's neck from the two wiry pigtailed. The back of her neck, he thought, was still babyish, innocent and touching. But elsewhere the world had caught up with her, clothing her in hideous navy-blue serge and white poplin, making wary the long-lashed eye. She was ten. What does a child of ten think about? he wondered. He was blessed if he knew, although there were so many opportunities for finding out. He tickled the back of her neck kindly and absently, as though it were the patch of warm fur behind a kitten's ear.

"Good-bye," Victoria said coolly.

They heard him banging about in the hall. The

drawer of the hall table was opened and shut, he muttered something, he leaped upstairs two at a time. Then down he came, stuck his head round the corner of the door, and asked Laura to pick a basket of gooseberries if she had time. "I'll take them up to the office tomorrow for Johnson and Miss Margesson — fruit is impossible in London." Halfway out, he looked back to say, "Do send another advertisement to the *Bridbury Herald* today, Laura. You might be lucky this time." Now he had really gone. The front door banged, and in a minute or two they heard the car coughing, failing, coughing again, and then its wheels crunching the gravel. He was off to pick up the fast London train at Ashton. The house seemed to rock, to sigh, to sink gratefully back into silence. Laura and Victoria, catching each other's eye, exchanged a small female smile.

"You ought to go too, Vicky," said Laura.

"All right."

"Don't forget your music this time."

"I've got to pick a bunch of flowers for Miss Grant. We're taking it in turns."

"Well, do hurry."

The cat, interrupted in a difficult bit of flute playing, lifted its reptilian head and stared at Victoria as she emerged. She hesitated. Where to begin? She broke off a bit of syringa. Already dropping, it showered her with petals. Slowly plodding along the weedy rampant flower border, she broke short heads of poppy, anchusa, raspberry-colored sweet cicely, a pansy, two pinks. Bunched tightly together, they looked charming. She glanced round the garden. It was perfect, she thought. They were always gloomy about it, her mother and father. Terrible, terrible, they said — as though a few old weeds mattered! She liked it shaggy.

"Victoria!"

"Coming!"

"The bus," said Laura, thrusting satchel and music case into Victoria's flower-filled hands.

"If you go to the gypsy's this afternoon to look for Stuff, can I come?" asked Victoria rapidly.

"Aren't you having tea with Mouse Watson?"

"Oh, yes. Oh, bother." The Bridbury bus could be heard from afar, like a dragon ambling across the land, its snorts amplified by the high leafy banks of the lanes through which it was journeying towards them, full of school children, of cottage women sitting vacantly joggling with their hands folded over their baskets and purses.

"Good-bye!" screamed Victoria, waving and taking to her heels. The bus sighed to a standstill outside their gate, snapped up Victoria, and swayed on towards Bridbury. Laura relaxed against the doorpost, staring at the gate through which Victoria had

just disappeared, a sturdy little girl in an ugly gym tunic, her satchel bumping, petals showering from her bouquet, the music case jiggling by its metal bar from her hand.

3

SHE went slowly back into the dining room. The debris of breakfast things looked cold, awful, as though they were the mummified remains of some meal eaten a thousand years ago. But she sat down among them and poured out a last cup of tea. Ah, how good! Now, said the house to Laura, we are alone together. Now I am yours again. The yellow roses in the bowl shed half a rose in a sudden soft, fat slump on the polished wood, a board creaked on the stairs, distant pipes chirped. She knew all her house's little voices, as she had never done in the old days when there had been more people under her roof. Then there had been nothing but cheerful noises all day long. In the kitchen, caps and aprons shrieked with sudden merriment over their bread and cheese elevenses. The butcher's young man came whistling to the back door, on his shoulder a clean white enamel tray, reposing on it a leg of lamb which looked as though someone had just powdered it, and eight red and white cutlets, tiny and perfect as though they were doll's-house viands attached by glue. Good morning, madam, he would say, touching his forehead pleasantly if he saw Laura. Oh madam! called the voices, Are you there, madam?

The telephone bell was always ringing through those petrified remembered summers. A popular young couple, the Marshalls. Voices of people who were now dead cried Laura! over the wires from flower-filled, book-lined rooms in London that were now dust, the exposed tints of their freakish walls fading and streaking lividly in sun and rain. Oh, madam! called the voices. Guests arrived every week-end, turning up at cocktail time with dogs and little leather cases, an armful of magazines, grapes for Laura, chocolate drops for Victoria, who would be viewed, damp and delicious from the bath, in a fleecy blue dressing gown with a pink rabbit on the pocket. They had never been alone.

What had happened? Where had they gone? The pretty, hospitable house seemed to have disappeared like a dream back into the genie's bottle, leaving only the cold hillside. Laura sat alone, the silence settled with the dust on the empty rooms, and the caps and aprons rustled their way — whither? Into factories, people said, where they would learn to assemble the bright and shoddy as they had learned to pack the capsules of splintered destruction. It was funny to think that Ethel and Violet, who had spent

their days setting things in a precise pattern, plumping the sofa cushion, straightening the little mat under the finger bowl, drawing curtains against the wild stalking darkness, had learned to pack the capsule of hideous muddled death. They would never come back into the tame house again. Everyone said so.

Now, on this summer morning, when doors and windows stood open, it was possible to hear the house slowly giving up, loosening its hold, gently accepting shabbiness and defeat. Nature seemed to realize its discomfiture. Birds hopped boldly through the front door, evidently meditating a lodging; Laura's dusting hardly discouraged the bold machinations of the spiders. As she sat drinking her tea, a yellow butterfly came in and settled on the faded plum and white pattern of the curtains as though it could no longer plainly distinguish between outside and in. It fluttered its wings comfortably, and the other half of the rose quietly, fatly fell, bearing down with it a shocked head of golden stamens.

Ought they to sell? Every now and then they asked themselves that, but the answer was always the same, thought Laura, for they both loved it. Stephen loved it especially, their first house, his first stake in the country; he had lived in a flat in London before they married. And, if they did sell, where were they to go? Everyone who was lucky enough to have a house was sitting tight in it, drawing in their horns, shutting up another room, or dividing with another family. Anything but that, Stephen said firmly. The house was not really big enough for that sort of thing, he said. Now that he was home, he could not abide the thought of other people's bath water running out, meeting on the stairs with forced joviality, someone else's life pressed up against one in a too small space, like a stranger's overcoat against one's mouth in a crowd. He knew that, while he was away, women friends of Laura's and their children had come and gone continually, for a few weeks, three months, a year or so. They had eaten light snacks off trays, used the telephone piratically without paying for it, shared the work, and night and day filled the air with the dull, frivolous yatter which passes for female conversation. The contents of the glass and china cupboards had gone gray at their breath, their offspring had kicked the paint off the stairs and torn up the flowers in handfuls. That was all right while he was away, but now he was back it would not do. He was firm. His home was his own again. And things were bound to get easier, he said to Laura as they washed up in the evenings. He talked the situation over with the other men on the train, and they reported

that things were getting easier. Bellamy's wife had got a cook immediately the other day by an advertisement in the *Bridbury Herald*, he would say, critically holding the glass which he was polishing up to the light.

4

POOR Stephen, thought Laura, watching the yellow butterfly gaily making free with her curtains, quivering and flirting there as confidently as though it were on a common gorse bush beneath the undomestic sky. He hated the way they scraped along, scrambled and muddled along, though he said nothing. He took off his coat after dinner, hung it over a chair, and pitched into the washing up. Wretched victims of their class, they still had dinner. Without the slaves, they still cherished the useless lamp. Left alone, Laura would have settled and clung somewhere like that butterfly, sipping without ceremony, perfectly happy. While Stephen was away she had snatched her meals anywhere. But now there was a man in the house again they faced each other over polished wood, branching candlelight, the small ivory electric bell which was nothing but a joke.

During dinner, Stephen would expand, glow, visibly enjoy himself. Then a cloud of irritation descended on his brow, he took off his coat and hung it up without a word. The least he could do for her, he said, was that. He fetched the coal, stoked the boiler, cleaned shoes. Sometimes the wicker armchair in the kitchen gave a loud creaking report as they worked together straightening out the mess. Occasionally Laura wondered, though she did not invite Stephen to consider, whether the chair was creaking beneath the ghost of some former cook — Mrs. Abbey, perhaps, who had been killed in a London blitz. An ectoplasmic Mrs. Abbey rolled against the faded cushions, clapping her hand across her splitting mouth at the sight of Stephen with a dishcloth round his middle, frowning at a smear of grease on a glass. He was so good, so kind. He said little. But he was a neat man, hating mess and huggermugger. He could not take all this in his stride as she could.

She got up, pulled a tray through the kitchen hatch, and began to clear away the breakfast things. Stuffy's empty basket caught her eye, the blanket pathetically folded and waiting. Somehow she must find time to go and haul Stuffy back from Barrow Down. Then the gooseberries, Porter, the weekly shopping in Bridbury, the cooking — by the end of the day, shutting up the ducks and hens, putting down a drop of milk for the cat, she would be too tired to talk to Stephen, too tired to read. The print

danced before her eyes, her head nodded, she fell into a stupor of sleep. But she was getting abominably dull. Stephen never said anything about that either. All those years she had existed on a nursery plane of conversation; domestic gossip over the boiled egg and the Ovaltine with Betty, with Rosamund, with Sonia, with all the other women without men who had stayed here. Words ceased to have any masculine gristle; they were purely feminine symbols with which one exchanged flabby facts about food, clothes, and shelter.

She balanced the tray on the sideboard for a moment, leaning towards the Regency mirror topped by its gilt eagle. The familiar face looked faithfully back at her, saying, Here I am, there You are, the Laura Marshall people see when they think of you. A bit thinner over the cheekbones, perhaps, the hair completely gray in front, though the back was still fair and crisply curling, like rear-line soldiers who do not know that defeat has bleakly overtaken their forward comrades. It was the first thing Stephen had noticed when he stepped back from their kiss after he got home. She had told him in her letters many times, joking about the gray hairs she was pulling out and then not bothering to pull any more. Everyone was going gray, she wrote — perhaps the shortage of fats in the food? But nothing has really happened until it speeds to the individual eye and bears down with pain on the heart. She's quite gray, he had thought in visible shock, before taking her in his arms and kissing her again as though she had become more than ever dear, as though he felt remorsefully that he ought to have been there to stop whatever it was that had played this bad joke on his Laura. The lost years were suddenly unbearably sad to them both. Oh Stephen, she had said, and tears poured out of her eyes while the railway station banged and clanged, ran, shoved, opened and flowed together indifferently again round the spectacle of one more soldier and one more weeping woman.

5

THE yellow butterfly rose and fluttered away, the cat got up abruptly and made off across the hall, her tail erect as a purposeful sail. There were sounds coming from the kitchen, and Laura picked up the tray and followed her. It was Wednesday, one of the mornings on which Mrs. Prout came to circulate the dust a little, to chivy gray fluff airily round the floors with a gray mop, to get down creakingly on her vast knees and scrub the kitchen. Mrs. Prout obliged several ladies in Wealding, conscious of her

own value, enjoying glimpses of this household and that, sly, sardonic, given to nose tapping and enormous winks, kind, a one for whist tables and a quiet glass at the local, scornful of the floundering efforts of the gentry to remain gentry still when there wasn't nobody even to answer their doorbells, poor souls. She was there now, panting with the exertion of the hill from Wealding, sighing, chirping to the cat, hanging a black oilcloth bag on the dresser, and popping something under the lid of the soup tureen. A little extra, brought for elevenses? Mrs. Prout was always tucking things away like a squirrel, under a drawer paper, under a lid, on top of a cupboard, tapping her nose, creaking, nodding inexplicable mysteries.

"Going to be a scorcher," she said, plucking the flowered cotton away from her bosom and flapping it between finger and thumb, as though working a punkah upon the huge breasts beneath. "Ever so warm bicycling."

"The tea is still quite hot, I think," said Laura, setting down the tray.

"Well, I won't say no to a cup." No "madams" flowed from Mrs. Prout. She was independent, a regular Radical, always had been. She looked at Laura amiably, for she liked Mrs. Marshall. There was a way about her, no denying it, but a vague one, ever so dreamy, always forgetting to order more salt, letting the fish go bad, letting the precious milk boil over on the stove when Victoria called that there was a kingfisher tangled in the chicken wire. There the milk was, stinking in brown bubbles on the stove top, and Mrs. Marshall crouching on the lawn, nursing the brilliant little emerald and blue body in her hand, dreadfully upset when it suddenly turned up its little toes and its pale tan breast and died, as anyone could have told her. Where would she be without Mrs. Prout? Mrs. Prout often asked herself as she knelt and creaked and banged about the house, noting that it was going downhill, getting worse every week and nothing much you could do about it. A pretty house, no doubt, when it was kept nice. But now, with only Mrs. Prout banging the banisters three mornings a week, and Mrs. Marshall pottering as best she could, it was beginning to look down on its luck, a gentleman's house which had seen better days.

Wasn't it a shame, thought Mrs. Prout, Radical or no, that Mrs. Marshall couldn't get her girls back again? Oh, what a lot they were, with their bare legs and their painted mouths, afraid of a job of work, only thinking about that trash on the movies, running around and getting themselves babies at an age when Mrs. Prout had hardly finished playing with her dollies. There were several in Wealding after

the Canadians and them nigger fellas moved off. Little Nelly Bright, Mrs. Prout had seen her yesterday evening on her way to the whist drive, only a child herself, staggering along on her puny little slim legs, the heavy lump of a baby seeming too great a weight for her skinny little arms to bear. And all the Wealding ladies being so kind to Nelly and Mavis Porter and the others, smiling brightly past their bulging skirts, finding them shawls and the like, talking about the difficulties of wartime villages and so on, when what the little hussies wanted, thought Mrs. Prout, was a good hard one-two on their bare behinds. She wheezed indignantly, drawing in the tea in good hot mouthfuls, and the thought suggested another.

"Stuffy turned up?"

"No. I'll have to go over to Barrow Down this afternoon. I'm sure she's gone over to the gypsy's."

"Well! Artful! Mostly they wait for the gentlemen to come to *them*, but not old Stuffy! Isn't she a one?" Mrs. Prout chortled and winked, throwing her stout figure back in the wicker chair. "Do you want any raspberries for jamming? I hear that Mrs. Fowler is going to have a nice lot. Ours are going to be all miserable little scrumps this year, looks like — Prout says they're too old."

Too old, like Voller. "Do you know if Mrs. Porter's son could come along and do some gardening for us two or three evenings a week?" Laura called from the larder.

"Couldn't say," said Mrs. Prout coldly. Prouts and Porters lived next door to each other in two irregular, rose-hung Tudor hovels, the delight of all the artists, dark, insanitary, lit by lamps and candles, served by the ivied privy at the bottom of the garden between the beehives and the patches of sweet williams and the currant bushes. Laura, pursuing Mrs. Prout one morning round to the back door, had been startled by the sight of Prout enthroned under the ivy, peacefully smoking, a fat old man in his shirt sleeves, not visibly deranged by the spectacle of a lady appearing between the lilac bushes. He looked like an enormous Buddha, meditating beneath the clustering green berries. Grossness disappeared from the situation, and the only problem seemed to be to bow or not to bow, to break in upon that tranquil solitude or to tiptoe respectfully away.

"Mrs. Porter and me are not very good cousins at the moment," said Mrs. Prout coldly.

Good cousins — ah! Every now and then the Elizabethan-sounding phrase dropped from Mrs. Prout's lips as though new-minted. No, further back than that. Yes, something robust and enduring breathed from Mrs. Prout, vast old mountain of

becks and nods and lewd winks which would have needed no interpretation at the Lamb. Her gigantic varicose-veined legs straddled the centuries, her skirts blew in the air of a larger, dirtier, merrier yesterday. Laura, looking at her with sudden affection, said "I'll go and start the beds."

"I'll pop up and help in a jiffy. The crocks can wait," said Mrs. Prout.

6

SHARING this morning ritual, heaving mattresses, stooping, moaning Deary me! over yet another sheet worn thin as thin, Mrs. Prout became pure Elizabethan. The Shakespearean old nurse, bedding the pretty lovers, plumping the pillows knowingly, smoothing the linen in a tight band with a swollen red hand into the puckers of which the broad gold ring seemed to have been forced. Mrs. Prout savored the intimacy of the moment, saying nothing as she folded Laura's nightgown, but unable to quell the irrepressible quivering eyelid which signaled, Faded, seen better days, but how it goes to nothing in the hand! Only a scrap of chiffong, saucy as you like. And she swept one of Stephen's shirts off a chair contemptuously, shaking him out, eying him with a stare, stuffing him under her arm as though she had reduced him to a hank of hair and a bone, a limp bundle of dreams and desires which she, Mrs. Prout, knew all about and had no patience with. Men! she would say, sniffing, throwing out the cigarette ash, banging the books untidily stacked beside his bedside clock as though she would have liked to shake the nasty man-made life out of their covers.

"Split her pajamas proper again, I see," she said, seizing Victoria's rumpled night attire. "No thought for the kewpongs, have they?"

She looked across the bed at Laura, thinking. The child is like her ma, dreamy, never knowing whether she has her dress on to the back or the front.

"Pity you never had but the one," she said to Laura suddenly over Victoria's bed.

Out it popped, she didn't know why. The thing had come into her head on an impulse of liking and scornful pity for the poor thing with her soft hands, her gentle smile, her one chick. Success, for Mrs. Prout, was measured by fertility — how many seeds from the packet, how many yellow balls of fluff sailing over mirrored sky behind the maternal rump, how many piglets sprawling on the spotted pink sofa of the sow's belly. Herself, she had buried four, reared four, all boys. From her vast skirts four men had sprung. No girls for her, mooning and

spooning, staggering along on their little white shanks, lugging a great child, like Nelly Bright.

"Yes," said Laura, "it is a pity. I should have liked more."

"Well," said Mrs. Prout jovially, "plenty of time to put *that* right."

Laura laughed obediently, sighing. Mrs. Prout pounded downstairs to clear up the kitchen, and soon she could be heard above the gush of water, shouting words of cheer to the cat, singing a tuneless ditty. After that, she would get the sweeper, the dusters, the tin of polish, and bang round the rooms for a couple of hours, pausing to admire the photograph of Mrs. Marshall in her wedding dress, to say *Pretty dear!* to Victoria looking wide-eyed, niddle-noddle, for the photographer's birdie, to toss her head at Stephen on the piano. Men! and her duster would flick over him as she moved across to finger the curtains, calculate how much a yard, picture how pretty the room had looked when it was kept up just so. All this would be locked in her bosom, to be retailed when she felt like it, at Mrs. Bellamy's, or at Miss Sewell's, when she popped in one afternoon a week to do the silver and launder Miss Sewell's smalls. You're a fool, with your heart, Flo my dear, to take on so much — thus her crony Mrs. Sparks at the Leg of Mutton would chide her. But it was power, it was the draught of life to her. She could not do without it.

Laura, going to her room to fetch her purse (the next bus would be along soon, and she must follow Victoria in to Bridbury), heard Mrs. Prout's singing, and felt suddenly cheerful. The house, which had seemed melancholy as it creaked and chirruped and sighed to itself, as the yellow rose fell and the yellow butterfly settled, now appeared to ride confidently on the wave of Mrs. Prout's song. The trickle of sound gave continuity, promising a little retrenching and repairing, a shaking of dusters and spreading on of wax polish, a refusal to abandon the house entirely to defeat. Once more the mistress, Laura looked in her mirror, ran a comb through her short curling hair, and took up her bag. Ah, the beautiful morning, she thought as she ran downstairs, crying "Leave me a salad for lunch, will you? Must fly!" And she was off, running like Victoria to the gate.

Sardonic, from the pantry window behind the low berberis hedge, Mrs. Prout watched her go, thinking that there was nothing much of her, running there swinging her basket, thinking that it was a pity she'd never had but the one, thinking that it would be stuffy this morning in the bus, no doubt, and — drat it! there went a cup, the last of the flowered ones. Breathing heavily, Mrs. Prout bent

down and gathered up the fragments of white china, rose-garlanded, blue-ribboned, off the floor in her wet red hands. Oh dear, what a pity! She did like nice china, and such a scruffy lot of odd jobs they had now on the dresser. Mr. Marshall had his breakfast porridge out of a plate which had come down from nursery days, a rabbit in blue trousers was on it, pushing a girl rabbit in a wheelbarrow. And now the last of the roses. Majestically, Mrs. Prout stumped out to the dustbin, pushed back the lid, and consigned the shards to gray fluff and sardine tins. There! Out of sight, out of mind. She resumed her song.

7

THE bus that brought Laura back from Bridbury was full of women, sighing, sweating gently under the arms of their cotton dresses as they held onto their baskets and their slippery, fretful children. A spaniel on the floor at somebody's feet shifted cautiously, lifting a red-cornered eye towards his owner, hoping and trusting that no one would tread on his paw. She would get off at the church, the other end of the village, and call in at the Porters' cottage on her way home. At the Leg of Mutton, several people got out, the hot air changed and soaked up new smells as new people climbed in. The spaniel smell, armpits, onions went, and were replaced by sweet peas, more armpits, and old Voller, clambering aboard and sitting down very suddenly beside Laura. He smelled strongly of earth, like some tiny, antique animal who lived in a bank. His hand, lifting a red cotton handkerchief to mop his forehead, was a knobbly collection of knuckles, earth-darkened and spatulate, but his wrist was thin, blue-veined, touching as a child's.

"Terrible warm," he said. A ghost of a voice whistled from Voller like wind through a keyhole. "Going to see my darter at Gospel Oak," came the fluty little keyhole voice.

"Will you be able to come along this evening, then?" shouted Laura. He was deaf as an adder, poor old Voller. Only the keyhole of sound and hearing remained through which he could receive crumbs and drops of the world, a prisoner, walled up in that frail, brittle, ancient body. He nodded. He would come along. The raspberries, Laura said, would he net the raspberries? That, too, was pushed through the keyhole, and back came the little shrill whistle. Oh yes, he would net them. If he netted himself, the birds would see no difference. He would bud, he would blossom, his

toes would take root in England, his fingers would splay down comfortably into the soil.

"Good," shouted Laura, smiling and nodding down at him as she got up to go. Poor old Voller, she felt guilty going off now to see if she could not get a lusty young Porter to supplant him. Was the daughter at Gospel Oak kind to him? Laura knew her by sight, a big fresh woman like a horse dressed in blouse and skirt. Incredible to think that she existed owing to an impulse of old Voller's! Over his head loomed the shadow of the Institute, the yellow brick building on the hill where the old people crept in the sun, eking out the week's little wad of tobacco, meekly eating the bread of charity and idleness. She would talk to Stephen tonight, thought Laura, working with her basket past the fat knees, the bundles, the squirming children, towards the fresh air. Even if George Porter can come to us, we must keep on old Voller. She got out of the bus, feeling its hot exhaust fan out at her as it moved off.

The calm of Wealding enfolded her. Now Bridbury was the dream. The clock said See-saw four times, immediately striking twelve reticent notes. For what it is worth, it seemed to say, the hour is noon. The midday sky had the sheen of a tightly stretched width of royal-blue silk. A high insect hum came from the long grass and moon daisies of the churchyard. She pushed open the cottage gate, descended a deep step between rows of lilies, and walked round to the Porters' back door. Roses poured down from the crumbling cottage wall, wreaths and swags of crimson and pinkish yellow. The lilies were magnificent. Mrs. Porter gave them little attention beyond tipping out a pot of tea leaves round them now and then to keep off the blight; the little Porters made water against the stalks when they felt inclined. But the lilies were superb white tapers, thickly clustering, heavy with bees. No one in Wealding had such phloxes. Everything grew here in this patch of damp black soil, worked for generations. At the back door Laura paused, glancing at a pair of old boots, a child's battered tricycle upside down in the path, the privy open as usual beneath the ivy. No one sat there today, no Prout, no Porter. A hen throatily clucked, scratching among the currant bushes.

She knocked.

8

THE Porters were inside, eating dinner. She had banked on catching them at home now. Someone put down a fork on a plate, there was the silence of people listening with their mouths full, and then

Mrs. Porter opened the door, wiping her lips with her fingers, crying "Oh good afternoon, m'm. Excuse me not asking you in, m'm — we're having a bit of dinner." She edged herself out, half closing the door, so that all Laura could see was a patch of damp wall and a calendar depicting two gray kittens sitting in a man's boot. Inside, the eating noises began again.

"Summer weather at last, m'm," said Mrs. Porter, smiling, looking Laura up and down. The respectful address escaped her continually like a soft hiccup. She was no Mrs. Prout, she recognized the gentry even if they were going through difficult times. The "m'm" bubbled from her as though from a deep old spring. Her smile revealed shocking teeth, blackened ruins tumbling one upon the other, but her dirty dress was a cheerful blue, the color of a sugar bag; in her improbable yellow hair, grips and bits of rag bristled like leeches, but would later be drawn off and replaced by a jaunty, grubby blue bow. One of these days, she often said, she would go to Doctor Comstock and find out about getting a fine set of teeth. Her dirty feet, veined with purple nodules, were thrust into broken-down evening shoes. She smiled at Laura, respectful, slippery, false as a cat. She was a light one, all Wealding knew it. When the Army were here, she was seen smoking cigarettes, drinking at the Leg of Mutton, larking in the fields with soldiers young enough to be her sons. A fat corporal named Tuck was forever hanging round the cottage. Mrs. Porter sat on his knee, Mrs. Prout had reported to Laura, with Porter looking on, a dummy in his own chimney corner. Shrieks and giggles and slaps had floated out from among the roses. After Tuck left, she took up with a Canadian, a nice young fellow. The men of the Observer Corps, sitting waiting for Heinkels on Barrow Down, had seen the blue dress frisking spryly among the bracken, the khaki patch following after, khaki and blue sinking from sight among the fronds, sinking, drowning from sight in the green breakers, not rising again. It had relieved the tedium of their afternoon nicely, Mrs. Prout had implied, winking, tapping her nose as she stood at Laura's sink.

"I was wondering —" began Laura.

"Yes, m'm," said Mrs. Porter, her light blue eyes sliding with false humility over Laura's dress and face.

A chair squeaked along the floor in the dark little room behind her. How many there? George, the eldest son, was back from the war. One of the elder girls, Dolly, looked after old invalid Mrs. Grant in the village. Mavis Porter had come to grief, light, like her mother. She had gone off in the

W.A.A.F.'s and come back with a child, fathered by a Pole. Married, of course, with a wife and family out there somewhere, Mrs. Prout had reported to Laura with a gale of sniffs. Men! she had cried, whacking the soap powder into the washing-up water in a frenzy of contempt. No doubt he had kissed hands, quite the foreign gentleman, taking in poor Mavis, who was a nice girl though not really strong in the head. Men! Mrs. Prout had snorted, shaking them violently out at the back door with the dusty floor mat.

Yes, Mavis was here, George, Dolly, but of the younger Porters Laura could not keep account. Mrs. Porter threw them off so lightly. The blue dress bulged, it clung concavely again, and again a bundle lay in the old pram outside the back door. Between bouts in the bracken, Mrs. Porter always had a child in her arms, and she loved them all, she named them so ambitiously. Victoire, the one who was born when the bonfire flared on Barrow Down, had been named, and goodness only knew, Mrs. Prout had said tartly, whether it was going to look like a fat corporal or a thin Canadian. Goodness only knew, Mrs. Porter did not. She enjoyed life, she took what came. The evening shoes, the afternoon bow which would follow the morning curlers sucking the life from her yellow hair, were somehow pathetic, Laura thought.

9

YES, m'm," Mrs. Porter was saying now, while an infant Porter suddenly appeared at her skirts, straddling on bandy legs, smiling shyly at Laura with a messy mouth, "Colonel Cochrane is leaving. Going to live near his sister in Ireland, isn't he, m'm? No, he hadn't said nothing to George about the new people taking him on."

"Then do you think —?" asked Laura.

"George!" called Mrs. Porter over her shoulder.

"Don't disturb him if he's at his dinner," said Laura.

"Oh, he's just about finished, m'm. Meals don't take so long nowadays, do they? It's a job!"

Now appeared George Porter behind his mother, the first-born, the opposite end of the line from the tiny creature swaying beside the blue skirt, showing its bare tail beneath its petticoats as it nearly lost its balance. He wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, grinning. Laura had not seen him since he got out of the Army. Before that, he had been one of the boys of the village, shambling about in gangs, hanging over walls on Sundays to see the cars go by to the coast. Good gracious, thought

Laura, what a magnificent young man he has become. Masculine beauty is now so rare, tamed into a genteel quality known as "attractive," that the occasional authentic bright gleam takes away the breath. Thus should men be, stated George calmly, emerging in his splendor from the poky dark cottage, springing like a god from the union of a woodman who could hardly read and a slut. Had Mrs. Porter wandered into the bracken in her youth with a handsome stranger? But no, there was an unmistakable reminder of his father about the chin, just as there was something of his mother in his blue eyes, but all refined, gilded with immortal powder. They were waiting for her to speak, and there she was, caught staring, dreaming as usual.

"Well," said George reflectively when she had finished.

He looked at her amiably, as though she were a nice sofa. That must be the penalty of the gray hairs, the tired shadows under the eyes; that must be the beginning of getting old. She had noticed it. Young men looked at you as though you were a nice sofa, an article of furniture which they would never be desirous of acquiring. The signal flags were hauled down, the lights went out, all commerce between the sexes to cease forthwith. Certain faithful, seasoned admirers remained loyal. Philip Drayton, now a dignified K.C., a terrific swell, still remembered to send the right flowers (lilies of the valley) on the right days with the old card, "For Laura — Phil." Yes, she thought fretfully, while with placid face she stood talking to the Porters, yes, indeed, was not Doctor Comstock particularly gallant when they met in the village, twinkling at her out of his old Vauxhall, saying, No need to visit you on my round, I can see that, Mrs. Marshall? Did not even Mr. Tubbs, the butcher, revive when she came in, sparkle and crack a joke and become a dog, leaning forward tenderly to whisper, even though they were alone in the shop, Would you like a tail?, diving into the cold room and returning to place the precious oxtail in her basket as though he alone, for her sweet sake, had hacked it off the infidel in the Holy Wars? But the young men — she drooped and admitted it — the young men like George looked at you and saw a sofa. Sad, sad, sad!

"Well, I don't know," George was saying, looking from her to his mother, "I don't know that I'm staying much longer," he said.

"He's been offered a job," Mrs. Porter said.

"A pal of mine in Coventry," said George. "A garage. There's prospects."

"I see," said Laura.

"There's nothing doing here in Wealding," he

said, staring round in disgust, glancing at the privy, at the old net curtains laid over the currant bushes.

"No cinema nearer than Bridbury, never a dance hardly, m'm," said Mrs. Porter. "It does make it difficult for the young folks to settle. Mavis is just the same. She's seen life. I can't seem to settle, Mum, she says."

Mavis had seen life. Mrs. Porter's smile continued placidly to reveal the blackened ruins. The Polish baby, then, had been no more than a souvenir stone, a brass ash tray, a length of embroidery, slipped into the returning daughter's suitcase as proof that she had made the tour.

"He's been to ever so many places, m'm," Mrs. Porter was saying. "India, haven't you, George?"

"Yes," he said somberly, "India."

The cottage seemed to dwindle. George stalked superbly across a blazing landscape, peacocks screamed, sacred old carp moved lazily beneath the pads of blue lilies in the lead tank. The Porters were all-pervading. They pushed out tentacles to Poland and to India. They gazed hungrily at the Bay of Naples. For centuries their blue English eyes must have been staring over the unwieldy prows of ships towards the still, untested, threatening shores.

She said, "Well, I'm sorry you can't come. I'll tell Mr. Marshall."

"Yes," he said nodding. "Sorry, but that's how it is. You must go where money is these days."

"And where the girls is, eh?" cried Mrs. Porter, forgetting her soft, servile hiccup, laughing shrilly.

"Yes," he said simply, "where girls is, too."

A child began to cry indoors. That was little Roy, Mavis's baby, said Mrs. Porter, once more smirking, sliding, respectful. "Go and get him to show Mrs. Marshall, George," she said, "for Mavis isn't fit to be seen. He's a lovely kiddie," she said to Laura, as George came back carrying the baby. He wore only a vest with his Army trousers, and his muscular sunburned arms held the little boy with peculiar gentleness. Roy's tears hung on his long lashes, but he settled down happily in George's arms. Out of dark, insanitary, crowded holes like this, thought Laura, often comes the astonishing tenderness of George's sort of man for their young. Stephen and his sort do not know it.

She looked at George, unself-consciously nursing his small nephew who had brought Poland into this English Tudor hovel, and thought, Yes, he will go. I see it all. He will leave Wealding, following his fortune to the city. Like a gypsy gazing in a crystal, she saw him prospering, building a home, nursing his own babies. All the Georges will leave Wealding, and what will be left? Old Voller, sucking a pipe in

the chimney' corner, Roy, the baby, still content to play in the sun.

"What a darling," she said, touching the child's cheek.

"He's a proper rogue," said Mrs. Porter proudly. "Mavis do have a time with him."

Mavis, a young Mrs. Porter, buttoned with such obvious insecurity during the war into the W.A.A.F. uniform, good-natured, easily laughing, always ready for a slap and a giggle — the crystal revealed only too clearly where she was going, too. She would leave Roy here with the other Porter broodlings, and off she would skip, spry as a young cat, returning now and then to dump another kitten in the straw before making off again. The Porters were the adventurers. Without moving from Wealding, Mrs. Porter would sow blue eyes and fair skin over the earth.

"I must go," said Laura suddenly. "Good-bye, Mrs. Porter. Good-bye and good luck if I don't see you again," she said to George.

"Cheerio," he said, indifferently and amiably gazing at this pleasant sofa, this nice piece of female furniture which had turned up at his back door. He turned, shoving the door open with his shoulder.

"Good-bye!" cried Laura, fleeing.

10

SEE-SAW, said the clock. As though the See-saw had released him like a carved wooden figure from a weather house, Mr. Vyner shot from the church porch, saw her, and waved a hand.

"Halloa, halloa!" he called.

He ran down the steps and crossed the road, lowering his voice as he said, "You've been visiting my bad patch, I see. Who was it, Prouts or Porters? The Porters?" He shook his head, smiled, and sighed. "Young George is leaving, his sister told me. I'm sorry. We could do with more of him in Wealding. But they really are — they *really* are —"

He made a vague, helpless gesture, he laughed helplessly, looking towards the Porters' hump-backed roof as though they overpowered him even at that distance. The Vicar, thought Laura, the traditional butt of kindly comedy, the chevalier of spinsters, crowned with the wilting cucumber sandwiches of a thousand garden parties. And it was Mr. Vyner's fate to look and sound the part of the fruity-voiced churchman, the hearty curer of souls, destined to lose his trousers before the curtain fell on the second act of the roaring farce. He boomed and brayed through the village. He had served in India for many years as an Army chaplain, and he

made religion sound like a sort of church parade, with God as the C.O. counting the boots as they clumped in. But he was really good, a saint who had the misfortune to sound like a bore. Laura liked him immensely. He sweated from one end of the village to the other, no distance too long, no hour too late to bring comfort to one of the poor human souls over whom he yearned with such compassion.

"I was trying to get George along to help in the garden," she said, "I hadn't heard that he was going."

"Yes, they're all going," he said, "they can't stick it here — not enough doing for them. German prisoners at all the farms — I suppose you've seen them? Splendid workers, Mr. Watson was telling me." He looked up at the sky. "Really hot today. We've got old Mrs. Pallett's funeral this afternoon."

"Good-bye," he called, turning in at the wicket gate in the high hedge, while Laura walked on with her basket.

How hot it was! The midday heat was rising to a head, like milk to the boil, singing in a clotted hum of bees, of crickets among the sorrel and daisies, of gnats dancing above the cresses tugged all one way by the trickle of water running under the hedge. An old woman came out with a pail, hobbling across the lane to the tap dripping among the mosses. She had lived to see men flying overhead like birds; to stand among the hollyhocks watching bombs spluttering across the stars to kill a family forty miles away; to turn a switch and hear the great voice from Westminster correcting her kitchen clock. All the same, she had to hobble with a pail to the tap among the mosses and the green viper tongues of ferns. At night, large shadows would set oil lamps above the potted geraniums in the tiny windows.

And Laura turned thankfully in at her own front gate. The house was closed, each window carefully shut before leaving by Mrs. Prout, to whom Wealding was full of threatening characters with an eye to Mrs. Marshall's tarnished silver. I am not at home, said the house coldly with blank eyes and pursed lips. Those tiles, Laura was thinking as she felt in her purse for her key, must really be seen to, or we'll get a flood in the next heavy rains. She went round to the kitchen door and let herself in. Silence of an empty house just ticking over with the faint arterial life of a coal dropping in the grate, a pipe sizzling, a chair creaking as though some ghost had quitted it. A whiff of Mrs. Prout, compounded of sweat and flowered cotton and peppermint drops. The cat sat with her feet exactly together, coldly unwelcoming. Stuffy had not returned.

She had just put her basket on the table when the telephone bell shrilled through the closed rooms.

11

WHEN Laura came back from speaking to her mother, there were immediately a great many things to do. She unpacked the packages she had bought in Bridbury, thinking, as she picked sodden bits of the *Times* leader off wet fish skin, How horribly dead food is, how much deader than one ever suspected when it turned up by magic, nicely browned, with crescents of lemon, waiting above little lamps on the sideboard. "Mr. Molotov —" she picked him off the fish scales; "the position in Trieste today must —" and with a gesture of irritation, she whipped the position in Trieste away from the damp mournful slab which had surely never swum and sported among sunlit rocks and weeds. The position in Bridbury today had been a shortage of fish, so that Mr. Kellett, the fishmonger, was in a bad temper with the long line of waiting women, slapping the gray neutral slabs into their baskets, or, to the favored few, offering more recognizably maritime creatures with ugly flat heads and accusing goggle eyes. "It's terrible," Mr. Kellett had grumbled, diving his scarlet hands into a bucket of goggling monsters, "it's never been worse, not even in the war, it hasn't." The line of women had swayed and sighed, murmuring uneasily, staring with depression at the dwindling pile of fish, summoning up a false brightness when their turn came to step forward under Mr. Kellett's angry little blue eye. And tonight, chewing the dead slab which she would disguise as something or other, Stephen would say thoughtfully that it was odd what had happened to the soles. Had they disappeared from the seas, a wartime casualty? Not that this was not, of course, perfectly delicious, he would add kindly.

She moved round the larder and pantry, opening lids, taking down jars, stowing away the seed-cake, Stuffy's biscuits, the oranges which had crowned the morning's expedition. Mrs. Prout had washed the lettuce and left Laura's lunch tray set on the side, its silver and glass and neat napkin seeming to say, with a toss of Mrs. Prout's head, What's the odds? Let the poor creature eat her bit of rabbit's food in the style to which she has been accustomed. No body in it, Mrs. Prout would sniff over the wet lettuce, but let her pretend to have a real meal with all the refinements of side plate and folded damask and glass goblet (one of the remaining four survivors). But first, thought Laura, she would start some of the evening's cooking before eating. She began to move pans back and forth off the stove. She used the colander, the grater, wooden spoons of various sizes, and a small army of basins.

Her cheeks became flushed. Would the sauce bind? And lo, it bound, while her heart did likewise. But with a hiss, something else boiled over disastrously, so that the cat, who knew Laura, got up and withdrew in prudent haste. A sad brown smell invaded the cluttered kitchen. Mopping up the ruins, Laura thought of Mrs. Abbey, their former and best cook, Mrs. Abbey, who had been killed by a flying bomb while taking a cup of tea with her niece Flo in Putney. Mrs. Abbey's kitchen, while dinner was brewing, had been marvelously neat, on the stove the saucepans boiling peacefully, on the enamel table top, under the clinical light, the egged and breaded fillets of sole lying waiting in a row. And now Laura, in Mrs. Abbey's unrecognizable kitchen, went through the same gestures of trimming bread crusts, draining, chopping, but with the slowness and slight stiffness of the performing poodle who had learned the routine too late in life. Phew! She straightened up from the stove, pushing the curly hair away from her forehead. It was hot, terribly hot in the kitchen. She wanted a drink of water. And now she would carry the tray into the garden and eat her salad.

The lawn was thickly powdered with daisies, over which Stephen swore hopelessly in the evenings when he dragged the lawn mower out of the potting shed. Laura thought them prettier than the bare patches of burned leaves which followed his over-heavy-handed sprinkling of lawn sand, for Stephen was another performing poodle, struggling clumsily through the routine of the departed Chandler. Between him and old Voller, most things were too late or too early, frost took them, mice ate them, unknown blights descended. In the week-ends, Stephen struggled frantically with the garden, which turned a sour face and mourned for Chandler.

12

WATCHING a beetle blunder through the daisies, hastening on in his unending pilgrimage over the earth, Laura remembered with slight depression that her mother was coming to stay. She would tell Stephen tonight over dinner, and he would say instantly, Oh splendid! Then a careful pause. How long is she coming for? he would ask casually. Only a week, she would be able to say reassuringly. Just while she sees Briggs.

"Such a nuisance, darling," Mrs. Herriot had mourned on the telephone, delicate and clear over the air from Cornwall. "I broke a tooth, and I'll have to see Briggs about it."

Mr. Briggs of Wimpole Street — for years the

Herriots had gone to him. Surely, Stephen would say, there must be excellent dentists in Truro, for instance, without your mother trailing all the way to London for that sort of thing? But in certain things Mrs. Herriot was inflexible, following, like a mesmerized hen, a chalk line of behavior which the years had laid down. One went to Briggs for teeth, to the Army and Navy Stores for wine, to Wooland's for hats, to a guild of distressed invalid gentlewomen in Kensington for underclothes, to the Times Book Club for the latest biography. Right through the war Mrs. Herriot had come up from Cornwall on her little foraging expeditions, not bothering about the blitzes, as indomitable as Mr. Briggs himself, who, when not-so-distant crashes shook the windows of his consulting room, would simply select another instrument and say One really can't notice this sort of thing, can one? The lip a *leette* more relaxed, if you please.

"What about Daddy?" Laura had asked on the telephone, and Mrs. Herriot had replied, "Aunt Vi will come and see to him for the week."

Dependable Aunt Vi, thought Laura, the indispensable female relative always ready to hand, always bright though without more than a churchmouse pittance, herself a distressed gentlewoman though not making French knots on Mrs. Herriot's nightgowns in Kensington. Mrs. Herriot used Aunt Vi quite remorselessly, calling her from her room in a private hotel in Bayswater only when there was work afoot — a domestic crisis, or a village shindig involving bran tubs and endless bread and butter cutting, or Arthur to be ministered to while his wife headed for Wimpole Street. Colonel Herriot could not be left unattended. All his life he had been looked after, for years he had barely put on his own boots, and if he were alone for even a few days he visibly wilted, became mournful and bloodshot as an old spaniel padding round the house. Aunt Vi, turning up staunchly from Bayswater, would supply the necessary female figure to sit behind the coffee-pot at breakfast, to say Change your socks, Arthur, when he came in wet from gardening, to offer suggestions after dinner as he groaned over the *Times* crossword puzzle, sitting in the chintz armchair near the gruesomely dashing photograph of himself as a young cavalry officer.

"Poor old Aunt Vi," Laura had said, suddenly smitten with compunction at the thought of the slight mustache, the cheerful meekness (she never failed to remember Victoria's birthday, accompanying the little gift with a pretty card of bunnies or kitties inscribed in elegant writing "From your old Auntie Vi"). "How is she, Mother?"

"Oh, Vi's always strong as a horse," Mrs. Her-

riot had replied, with the slight touch of annoyance which followed attention diverted from herself. Her voice became softer. "How are *you*, childie? Stephen isn't letting you do too much as usual, I hope?"

"No, oh no," Laura had said brightly and hypocritically.

"And my Victoria? Give her a hug from me, and tell her —" and the conversation tailed off in grandmotherly endearments, a few afterthoughts, and a storm of time signals going off like Chinese crackers. "Good-bye until Tuesday, then, darling," Mrs. Herriot had said. Laura, hanging up, had pictured her mother doing the same thing at home, waiting for a moment, in the hall where the telephone stood on an Ashanti stool beneath crossed assegais and a miniature of a military ancestor. Through the open door, the garden would be humming with heat and color as Laura's garden hummed. Mrs. Herriot would remain gazing out for a moment at the queer tropical spikes of the yucca, the little stone figure of an Indian god with his fingers chipped off by one of the evacuees who had been with the Herriots during the war. For a brief interval, Laura guessed, her mother would be still, marshaling her forces, staring with faded blue eyes into the sunshine, before she picked up the receiver again, and, giving the London number as slowly and crisply as though the St. Pol post office spoke nothing but Hindustani, set about summoning from the air the soothing genie of Mr. Briggs.

(The beetle had overturned on a plantain root and had a few moments of humiliating misery, working its legs and blue-black overlapping plates, before Laura moved it over with a blade of grass and it hastened away. She got up and carried her tray indoors. She washed up, fed the cat, and got a bowl for the gooseberries. And out she went again, snatching up an old hat, for it would be grilling sitting there among the spiny bushes.)

13

HER mother, Laura thought, had not adapted to things. The war had flowed past her like a dark, strong river, never pulling her into its currents. Now, said Mrs. Herriot, thank God it was over, and everything could get back to normal again. She brushed her hands together and looked round commandingly. Mr. Briggs and the Army and Navy Stores had survived, the distressed gentlewomen had crawled out of the basements and were executing French knots and hand-faggotting again from their couches of pain. Now, darling, said Mrs.

Herriot, the servants will be coming back, they will be glad to get out of those awful uniforms, out of those appalling huts into a decent house with hot baths and a nice bed. And when they did not, she simply could not understand it. Down in St. Pol, the girls had not yet caught on to the new ideas. Mrs. Herriot swooped down occasionally like an eagle on the depressing slate-roofed cottages and carried off another fourteen-year-old child, raw but willing, who would learn to cram her red wrists through neat white cuffs and to bring in the Colonel's grog tray every evening. So the mahogany continued to reflect the silver polo cups pleasantly, the Herriot world held together for a little longer in its deadness of glacial chintz strewn with violets and side tables strewn with the drooping-mustached faces of yesteryear. The war had been horrible, really ghastly — had not the Carrutherses lost three nephews, the Whyte-Jevonses two airmen sons and a daughter drowned in a torpedoed ship, Colonel Herriot's niece Betty her husband in a Jap prison camp? But mercifully it was over, said Mrs. Herriot, and Laura must really pay attention to her appearance a little more now that Stephen was home.

(There hung the gooseberries, fat grayish-green lanterns and smaller red ones, hairy as a man's chest. Laura sat down on the ground with the bowl in her lap and began to pick. The heat, rising to its midday head, seemed to have throbbed and spilled over, or else it was the shade of the fruit bushes, for it was pleasant sitting here. She reached for a bough of large gooseberries, and the bough spitefully jabbed its long thorns into her hand.)

Your hands, Laura darling! They used to be so pretty, quite one of your best features, Mrs. Herriot would cry out in horror. Hands are such a giveaway, she often said complacently in the old days, surveying her own well-shaped fingers. When she came to stay with Laura, she sat looking round, on her charming crumpled face the ghost of a sniff more subtle and disparaging than any of Mrs. Prout's. The disparagement, Laura irritably knew, was all directed against Stephen. Colonel Herriot had been looked after all his life, he had to be constantly coaxed and stayed with the female comforts of Aunt Vi behind the coffee tray, the little maid to bring his shaving water and his grog tray, but his wife still kept up the pleasing fiction that the male was the protector.

"Stephen should see that it's too much for you," she said to Laura. "It worries me to death thinking of you struggling along here with the housework and cooking and the child. Victoria had an enormous split in her blazer yesterday — had you noticed it?"

She said it had been like that for weeks. My darling, you're looking dreadfully fagged out. During the war of course it was necessary, but now Stephen must absolutely insist —"

The ghost of Mrs. Herriot's delicate sniff would haunt Laura for the week that her mother was in their home. It would gently vibrate the cobweb which Mrs. Prout's broom always by-passed on the picture rail, it would ruffle the dishwater in which Laura was guiltily washing up, it would pursue Laura and Stephen into their beds. Sitting knitting a jersey for Victoria (the indignant speed of her needles seemed to envisage a granddaughter naked as well as unkempt), her back very straight, her horn-rimmed glasses on her pretty pinched nose, Mrs. Herriot had said on the occasion of the last sortie to Briggs, "After all, Laura, here you are, only thirty-six —"

"Thirty-eight."

"Thirty-eight, then." Carefully controlled annoyance for a moment passed over Mrs. Herriot's face. "Quite young enough, at all events, to be enjoying yourself more than you do. So far as I can see, you spend the entire day doing the work of an unpaid domestic servant. When I think how you were brought up —"

She made a sweeping gesture with a knitting needle. In the arc of the movement, she seemed to be contemplating for a reproachful moment the tennis parties, the little trips to Italy, the hunt balls. Laura had never learned how to dust a room in her life. Though the Herriots were only modestly well off, they managed to get value for their money, living quietly down at St. Pol, and people liked Laura, asked her to stay, mounted her on their horses. At a hunt ball she had met Stephen Marshall, staying with friends in the neighborhood. A young man called Marshall from London, "something in the City" — Mrs. Herriot had disliked the sound of it from the very beginning. Her needles clicked in and out of the blue jersey for Stephen's daughter. She looked absently at the photograph of Laura in her wedding dress, a tall girl in a mist of tulle and Grandmother Herriot's old Limerick.

"Such a lovely dress," she said. She sighed. "By the way, how is Philip? Doing very well, so I heard from someone the other day — who was it? Oh, his aunt, of course, old Miss Crompton. Still so wonderful, after having had soldiers in her house all through the war and dozens of evacuees and heavens knows what." She counted stitches. She sat bolt upright, her feet in the worn brocade slippers close together as a cat's. Philip Drayton, her silence said louder than words, would know how to look after his

wife. If you had married him, as I wanted you to do, you would not be slaving away here with your hands spoiled and your hair gray. She looked up at Laura.

"Thirty-eight," she said. "I can't believe that you're thirty-eight, darling. How this frightful war has eaten up everything."

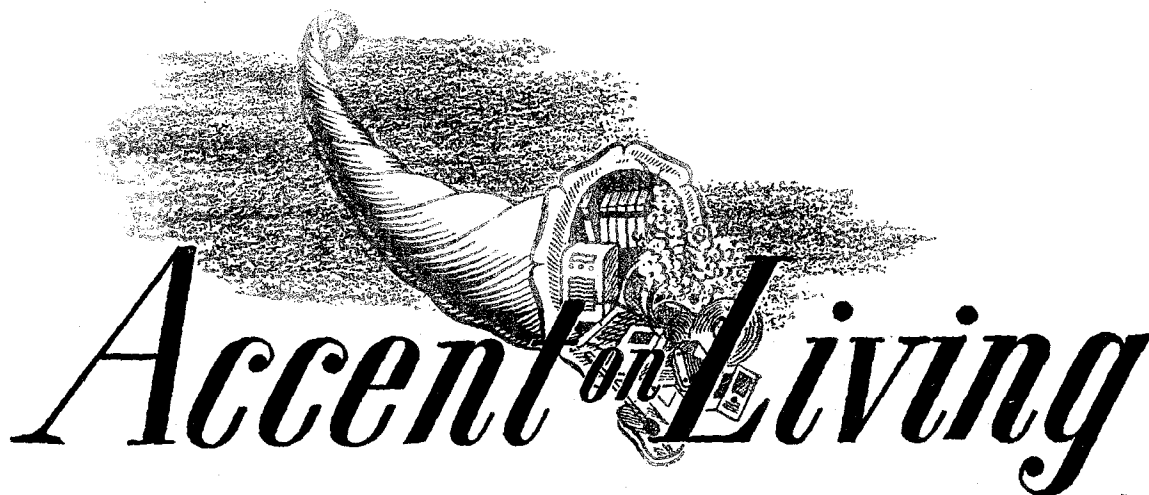
Daughters ran away, away. One doesn't really know what's going on, her eyes had said pathetically. Laura kissed her. Mrs. Herriot straightened her glasses, and the crisp governing note came back into her voice. "That charwoman of yours, darling," she said. "That Mrs. Prout, isn't it? Does she never say 'madam'?"

(Laura's bowl was half full, but she had made very little impression on the forest of grayish-green lanterns. The garden had been planted in the cheerful belief that there would always be plenty of hands to net, to pick, to bottle and make jam. Beyond the lichen-gray forest of gooseberries hung the currants, white and red. The jays screamed and bounced over the raspberry canes, and a blackbird landed beside Laura, cocked his head and punctured a hairy red berry before he noticed her and fled with a startled "Mink!" Laura's left foot had gone to sleep. She shifted her position.)

Once or twice a year, Philip asked her out to lunch, a pleasant reunion, comfortably padded by two successful marriages. How's Stephen? Fine, thanks. And Cicely? Cicely's wonderful. The boys, too. Have I told you about Hugh — ? And he would tell a little anecdote about the boys, affectionate, sardonic, for he adored them, but had never in his life held them with the womanish tenderness with which George Porter had held the illegitimate son of his sister Mavis. The world's mess had by-passed the Draytons, merely setting a higher value, in its desperate need, on brains such as Philip's. He was going into politics, Mrs. Herriot had heard from old Miss Crompton. Cicely would be an immense help to him, and their house in Westminster had not even lost a window in the blitzes, they had a treasure of an old family cook and an older family parlormaid, who called him Mr. Philip and did not know that the age of the Common Man had arrived. He felt guilty about their luck, he said last time he and Laura lunched together, for most of their friends were existing in appalling discomfort. His aunt, old Miss Crompton, had shut up a wing, the Bampings were selling Rysdale. With charming tact he averted his eyes from Laura's hands, which he used to admire.

(And now the bowl was quite full of gooseberries. There was no more room for even one.)

(To be continued)



Accent on Living

This Month

Karl Zeisler did not send us any before-and-after examples of the editorial policies described overleaf in his confession, "The Hound in the Stadium." We should like, especially, to hear how his readers received him as a convert. Some of them must have mistaken, through the years, typographical noise for journalistic enterprise. We hope his newly embraced reasonableness will not lead them to suspect that he has gone fishing or taken to afternoon naps.

The act of self-appraisal by the American press is not infrequent, but it usually appears under such headlines as "Finds Newspapers Best Ad Media" or "Chain Store Head Lauds Dailies." Looking into his mirror, the editor invariably sees the verdict favorable; only the uninformed could be impressed by the seeming muscle sag or a slight puffiness around the eyes. The editor knows they are simply the hallmarks of maturity and not of high living.

If the editor prefers to look on the bright side of himself, he believes others should view him from the same quarter. He has developed a powerful set of conventions to this end: No outsider can possibly understand the intricacies of professional journalism; no professional journalist ought to criticize the press and thereby "foul his own nest." The critic whose findings are based merely on reading and research in the newspaper field, even though he may have spent a lifetime on that specialty, is brushed off as a well-meaning fool. If the same criticism comes from a newspaperman, he is promptly tagged as a traitor or a psychopath and, in any case, one who fails to savor the finer points of journalistic camaraderie and the fraternity of good fellows.

We must admit to a sense of novelty and refreshment in what Editor Zeisler has to say.

After the Congressional election last fall, Federal tax cuts were freely predicted. A weekly publication picked up the possibility as a red-hot week-to-week subject and for six months or more served up to its readers the latest, confidential, extra special, five-star, inside inside-stuff bulletin on what was going to happen to taxes. One week it would be a flat 20 per cent cut. Then a 10 per cent cut seemed more likely, then 15, again 20, and two or three 20's in a row. On one or two occasions the bulletins found that no cut at all was in prospect, but then they began jiggling again through the possibilities — on, off, maybe, not much. I tabulated twenty-six weeks of them, hot and cold, up and down. There was nothing much reported meanwhile in regard to hearings

or schemes on which tax cuts would depend, and no authorities were quoted for the changes of forecast.

As a taxpayer I traveled widely during the six months. There was hardly an area of the bracket from zero to twenty on which I did not roost for a week or two, but I wound up exactly where I started. I never did find out why I had been touring so furiously every week. The tax bulletins were harmless stuff.

I suppose the editor simply ordered the story one day and nobody ever thought to shut it off.

The tax bulletins represent the same kind of coverage that the press seems to apply to international affairs and the United Nations. It won't do to acknowledge a dull day among the foreign ministers. There must be action, lights, camera, and preferably a ding-dong contest which can be made to sound like a stake race or a fight in the Garden or a Big Ten



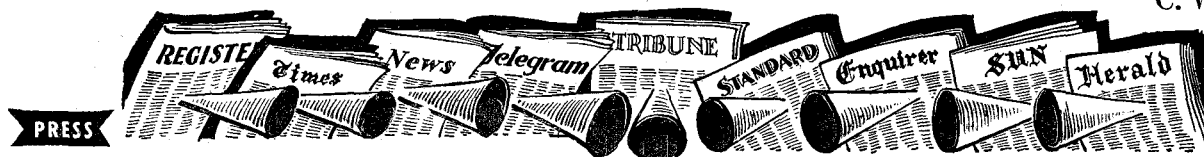
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game. The advance build-up resembles the old "grudge fight" ballyhoo — in fact the headlines are much more violent before the big conference opens than anything yielded up later on by the proceedings themselves. Ready to hand in the ammunition rack are the trusty headline verbs — Hits, Bars, Flays, Warns, Wrecks, Smashes, Crushes, Balks, Foils, Hurls, and so on. It's going to be a brawl any way you look at it, and if it doesn't come off as advertised,

blame the rascally diplomats and not the copy desks.

Diplomats who are irked by the headlines they get should simply include in every speech a highly complimentary reference to the American press. The coast-to-coast play on the story in that event would show that international relationships had taken a quick turn for the better. Regardless of what the rest of the speech might mean, the head would be: "CALLS U.S. PRESS FINEST IN WORLD."

C. W. M.



The Hound in the Stadium

By KARL F. ZEISLER

I AM a country editor and I happened upon a paragraph the other day that made me blush. I found it in *W. H. Hudson, A Portrait*, by Morley Roberts: —

Like so many men of science . . . he kept his eye on the ancient eternal drama of evolution and scorned those who were as ready as the cheap politicians to offer cures for the world's ills at a moment's notice and at six shillings a box.



The paragraph made me think back over the succession of shrill headlines and shriller editorials which I have published in the past eighteen or twenty years. It now occurs to me that we have all — the newspapers, I mean — been making too much noise. Nobody can think in a boiler factory. I am laying down my hammer and dropping my voice to conversational tones.

In country print shops, you know, we have an ancient and mildly sacrilegious legend that tucked away in a dusty case is a font of blackface wooden streamer type that the editor is saving for the "second coming." In our shop that type, long since rounded on the corners and press-worn, is now back in its dusty case to await its legendary purpose.

Day after day, that type had been used to bannerline the self-appointed Jeremiahs and overplay the shouts of the doomsters, with the honest intention of doing good. All these will toot Gabriel's trumpet in a hush from here on so far as I am concerned.

The extenuating circumstances for this constant yelling at the people ran out long ago. I joined stridently in the chorus from 1933 on, foretelling the certain end of the American Way. The rise of totalitarianism gave us a chance to develop antiphonal overtones, with some solo parts.

The coming of war shocked us into hushed tones for a spell in a new-found national unity, but the relative silence lasted only a short time. I did my best, along with the unscientific scientists, to frighten a bewildered and set-upon people into the Atomic Age.

I'm not quite ready to go back to Coolidge era attacks on the man-eating shark, supposedly the only editorial target that never fights back, but I'm all through using headline language and 12-point boldface type in the editorials I write from now on. I have quit pointing to the "whither now" signs at each successive crossroads, for I'm convinced that people perpetually facing crossroads are liable to lose all sense of direction.

I'm going to try to live down my portentous past, and live up to the expectations of free people to get guidance and not exhortation in a bewildering world from their editors, publicists, scholars, scientists, politicians, and other leaders. I'm going to try to remember that even in the Atomic Age the ancient eternal drama of evolution unfolds at a molasses pace in contrast to the daily pumped-up crises of the shouters. I'm going to relieve the strained ears of my few listeners and try to win back their credence.

Not long ago I sat, with 89,999 others, in a football stadium. Between halves students pushed an amiable, tail-wagging hound out on the playing field. Instantly a chorus of whistles, dog calls, and shouts arose from the jammed stands. I watched the mongrel rush frantically toward a half-recognized voice, and then wheel in response to a more piercing whistle. I couldn't help thinking that the American people have been in exactly the position of the hound in the stadium. They have been so much yelled at from the sidelines that it is no wonder they have not known where to turn in order to find the exit to calm and safety.

From now on, I'm going to let the people find the exit. Living in a small community, I think I am closer to the people than the Stentors perched on editorial high chairs and before network microphones who make a loud noise over every clash of opinion in order to be heard. I'm satisfied the people are tired of being shouted at. I think they know the score and keep closer tab on their affairs than most of the pundits realize. I believe that native common sense, given a chance to be heard above the racket, is more than a match for all the menaces you can shake a stick at.

KARL F. ZEISLER is Associate Editor of the *Monroe Evening News*, Monroe, Michigan. Our readers will recall his article "Who Wants Taxes Cut?" in the October, 1945, *Atlantic*.

FOOD

Cook's Tour

By CROSBY GAIGE

IT WAS in a Cuban patio that I first made the acquaintance of a number of dishes bearing Iberian influence. They became at once a joyous part of my culinary repertoire. The patio belonged to an American friend, James Gillespie, who lived at Mariel in the Province of Pinar del Rio, about thirty miles along the coast southwest of Havana. He was "Don Jaime" to his neighbors. He had a real flair for fine food, and his personalized versions of Spanish dishes were invariably improvements on the originals.

One dinner at Don Jaime's started off with a Moro Crab Cocktail. The succulent chunks of crab meat were served in crystal bowls bedded in finely cracked ice. In the center of each bowl was an ample glass of sauce. It was the well-chilled sauce that made all the difference from the usual offering of ketchup. Here is the rule for its composition:—

1 cup mayonnaise	1 tablespoon tarragon
2 tablespoons ketchup	vinegar
2 tablespoons chili sauce	1 teaspoon grated
1 teaspoon very finely	horseradish
minced green pepper	1 dash cayenne pepper

In Don Jaime's patio I first sniffed the pungencies of *Arroz à la Valenciana*. This dish must have been the creation of some cook of great genius. I wish I knew his name so that I might pay him proper tribute. It savors of the Mediterranean, and in one form or another and under various names its excellencies are known wherever Spanish feet have trod. The Andalusians call it *Paella* from the iron pot in which it is cooked. In the Gillespie household it was called *Paella*, and sea food did not predominate, as is usually the case. Take and enjoy this dish wherever you find it, but if you prepare it at home, try the Gillespie formula.

Into a good-sized stewpan or casserole pour one cup of olive oil, and when it is really hot, slice in three medium-sized onions. Next add two broiling chickens that have been cleaned and disjointed. Let onions and chicken sizzle and tan lightly on both sides until the onions are golden yellow. Have a sufficient quantity of long-grained rice—Patna, if you can get it—that has been thoroughly washed in several waters to remove all the surface starch, and then well dried. There should be a demitasse of rice for each person. Add the rice to the pot and stir until the rice begins to yellow.

On the stove, have a pot containing about three pints of good rich chicken stock at a boil and now add a cup of this to the rice. Stir the rice to prevent scorching. When the cup of broth has been absorbed add another.

At this point add to the pot eighteen well-washed

peanut clams in their shells (you may have to order these tiny bivalves in advance from your fish dealer), two dozen cleaned shrimp, and a dozen thin slices of Spanish or Italian sausage. If peanut clams are not available, use cherry stones. In your mortar put a level teaspoon of saffron and three cloves of garlic along with a half cup of hot chicken broth. Mash with the pestle until the broth is impregnated with saffron and garlic and then strain the seasoned broth into the pot. Mix well. Continue the cooking until chicken and rice are done and the clam shells have steamed open. Enough cups of boiling broth have been added to complete the job, and each grain of rice should be a separate and complete entity. Final, but not necessary, touches are a few strips of pimento and a sprinkling of grated cheese on top, and the dish should sojourn a couple of minutes beneath the broiler.

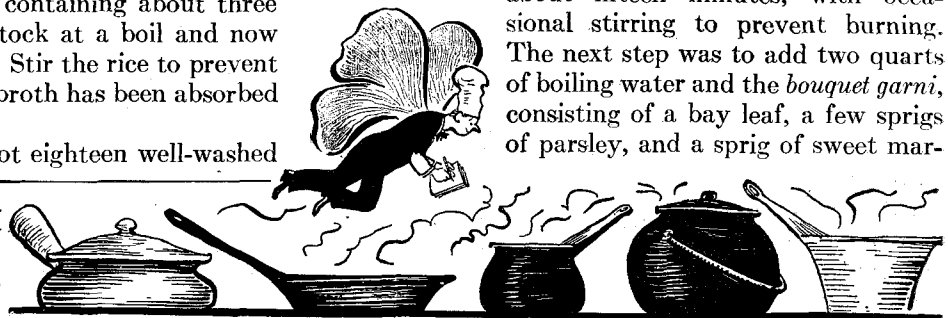
Memory brings back to me from another Cuban patio something quite magnificent for dessert. Each guest had on his plate a small chilled pineapple. The top had been cut off and an ample cavity scooped out. This was filled with a fifty-fifty mixture of pineapple ice and champagne.

Mrs. Herbert Johnson, of Racine, Rio, and intermediate points, is a talented actress and an equally capable cook. She gave a beautiful performance for me in a play called *Accent on Youth* under her stage name of Irene Purcell, and an even more brilliant one in my kitchen when she and her husband week-ended at Watch Hill Farm. For a Saturday dinner she produced a soup called *Canja*, famous in Brazil and in Portugal. I watched carefully, pad in hand, while she worked, and here is the record:—

1 plump chicken	1 cup rice
1 cup finely diced ham	2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove of garlic, minced	Pepper and salt
1 onion, sliced	1 bouquet garni

The cleaned chicken was disjointed, lightly rubbed with pepper and salt, and set aside for about an hour. Then Irene heated the oil in a good-sized saucepan and added the onion and garlic and let them cook until the onion was a golden color. Next the pieces of chicken went into the pot, and the pot was covered. When the chicken was browned on one side the pieces were turned over to allow the same light browning to take place on the other. The raw rice was then thoroughly washed, drained, and dried. It went into the pot along with the ham. The pot was again covered and the frying process continued over low heat for about fifteen minutes, with occasional stirring to prevent burning. The next step was to add two quarts of boiling water and the *bouquet garni*, consisting of a bay leaf, a few sprigs of parsley, and a sprig of sweet mar-

Author of many cookbooks, an authority on food and drink, CROSBY GAIGE is also a theatrical producer. He is the Chairman of New York's Wine and Food Society.



joram. (If marjoram is not available a stalk of celery may be used.) The liquid was allowed to bubble gently until the chicken was tender and ready to drop from the bones. At this point Irene took the chicken pieces from the pot, removed all bones, tendons, and skin, and cut the meat into small pieces, which rejoined the soup. Another five minutes of simmering and it was ready for service in hot earthenware bowls, garnished with chopped parsley.

Chupe is Peru's contribution to the chowder family. There are many versions of it. Here is one slightly on the de luxe side, which should go far toward promoting the Good Neighbor policy:—

2 minced green peppers	1 clove of garlic, minced
2 minced medium onions	1 quart good chicken stock
2 large potatoes, diced	
1 package cream cheese, diced	$\frac{1}{2}$ pound cleaned fresh shrimps, diced
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cream	2 egg yolks
Salt and pepper	

Fry onions, peppers, and garlic in a little olive oil until onions are golden. Add the diced potatoes, the pieces of shrimp, and the boiling stock. Simmer for half an hour. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cut the cream cheese into small dice and add to the soup. When ready to serve, thicken the soup with the cream and egg yolks lightly beaten together.

This hurried tour will permit only a brief and final stop in Mexico City, where native foods have real interest. A cautious study of Mexican and Aztec cuisines will be rewarding. In Mexico a fish is a *pez* until it is caught and then it becomes *pescado*. One of the most delightful fruits of the sea I have ever encountered is a baby red snapper (*huachinangito*, if memory serves), weighing perhaps a pound or so. Red snapper or red fish may be had in many Atlantic and Gulf Coast cities. At Prendes, an excellent eating place near the financial district, they split this little fish, broil it over charcoal, and serve it with parsley butter and French fried potatoes.

Fonda Santa Anita is a centrally located restaurant where national cuisine may be met in variety and quality. Start your meal with a glass of ice-cold *tequila*. Have ready half a lime, tilt back your head, and squeeze lime juice into your mouth. To this add as much salt as you can hold in the little hollow on your wrist back of your thumb. Experts propel the salt to the mouth by a sharp blow on the arm below the elbow. Thus equipped take the *tequila* in one gulp. For a soup try *Sopa de Albóndigas*—a tomato preparation garnished with *albóndigas*, or well-spiced meat balls. For an entrée, experiment with *tacos*, little turnovers filled with meat and fried in oil. For the main dish, test *Olla Catalana*, a Spanish version of a New England Boiled Dinner. A bottle of red Marqués de Riscal is recommended. If you have any capacity left, finish up with a *guacamole* and plenty of black coffee.



Chair in the Field

By JOHN HOLMES

At half past six in August, two trees,
Yellowing to bronze, bordered our mowed field.
It was toward evening and September, going cold.
A blue chair stood in the grass.

This is what it was.

Wishing I do not know what rush of joy among us,
The boy child in the old summer farmhouse
At noon had us to the meadow with steak and corn,
Cloud mapping the blue as after
We three sprawled on blankets of sun
And almost slept.

He later and we brought back to the house
The table, the milk, the spoons, the lucky idea.
Looking out after sunset I saw it,
The one chair blue there in green grass,
Human and his.

Time was ours and time goes
In shine and hurry as a boy grows.

I was for leaving it there to remember the day by.



FACTS

Squid

By LORUS J. MILNE

JUST beneath the surface of the sea, like a horizontal rain of rockets, dozens of pale forms streak away from the bow of a boat. They shoot into the surrounding darkness with a swirl of luminescent water in their wake.

A school of squid has been startled, and this fleeting glimpse is usually the only evidence.

The squid's soft body is sleek and smooth. Its safety depends on speed. Rapid escape is so essential that from head to tail the creature is streamlined for retreat; it is powered for fast movement backward. The propulsive force for this arrow-like flight is sea water, squirted from a single nozzle on the animal's underside. Unlike the jet motor of a V-bomb, the squid's rocket mechanism operates in fast-repeated pulses. And even as it hurtles backward through the water, the animal reloads. It allows its head and arms to trail behind, and in doing so exposes a slender neck. Around this neck, as though into the space left by an over-size collar, the squid sucks up water to fill a spacious chamber. When charged once more, the

LORUS J. MILNE is a teacher, biologist, and biophysicist at the University of Pennsylvania and Beaver College. This article, and the others by Mr. Milne which have appeared in the *Atlantic*, will be part of his forthcoming book, which Dodd, Mead will publish.

creature pulls back its head to stopper up the hole through which the water was taken, and contracts muscular walls to force the liquid through the open nozzle. With every pulse, another yard or so is added to the distance between itself and the object which startled it.

By day, sharks and large fish sometimes pursue the agile squid. For this peril the animal has another means of defense. It adds to the water expelled from its jet a black secretion which clouds the near-by ocean, providing the submarine equivalent of a dense smoke screen. Through this the pursuer cannot see that the squid has changed direction sharply and is darting off into another quarter. The blackened water clears to dusky brown, but not before the shark or fish has lost the trail.

Until recent years a close relative of the squid — the cuttlefish — was hunted actively by men in boats along the shores of the Indian Ocean. Its sacful of black secretion was valuable in commerce as "India ink" or "sepia" water color. So well known became the reddish-brown pigment prepared from the ink of the cuttlefish that everyone used the term "sepia" to describe the familiar shades. Actually "sepia" is the Greek word for cuttlefish, but the source and the product have become indistinguishably blended in English.

The squid, the cuttlefish, and the octopus are all members of a very odd group related to the snails and clams, the slugs and scallops. All of them are mollusks. But instead of carrying their shells on the outside as armor or, like the slugs, dispensing with them entirely, the squid and its kind have enclosed a greatly reduced shell and now use it as an internal stiffening structure not unlike a backbone. The remnant of shell which the cuttlefish has imbedded deep in its muscular body is sold to hang in canary cages as "cuttle-bone." That vestige of shell retained by the squid is horny and translucent. Fishermen who use the squid as bait call its shell a "pen" from a fancied similarity in shape to the feather quills our forefathers used in writing.

In eye structure the squid and its close relatives show an even greater resemblance to the vertebrate animals. By a totally different process, they have developed a pair of camera-like organs, each with a pupil and a lens. As in our eyes, the lens in a squid can focus a good image of surroundings on a retina, and it is obvious that these animals can see as well as the fish which pursue them.



Squids have a remarkable ability to change their colors, but the alterations seem to have no close correspondence to environment. It is not camouflage, but rather the expression of a restless nervous activity. In the outer layer of the skin are great numbers of tiny color bags, all under the creature's control. From each sac run many finger-like extensions to interdigitate with those of other color cells. The pigment in the bags can be gathered into minute points at the cell center, leaving all the extensions transparent and the animal a creamy white. Or the color cells containing purple pigment may be relaxed and in a fraction of a second the squid blushes to a deep maroon. The sudden change in hue may not affect all parts at once; if the animal is excited in some way, waves of color wash around its body. Each area pulses pale to dark to pale again. Other sets of color cells — blue, red, and yellow — can be brought into action, their different pigments spreading into the fine extensions and altering the general appearance of the animal.

If you reach a hand into an aquarium containing a quiet squid, and gently run a finger tip along its side, a wave of creamy white records just where you press. This action is not unlike the pale patch which follows a finger drawn along freshly sunburned human skin. But the squid's side does not merely recover its former coloration. The stroked area is excited to an independent display of color changes. These may last for a minute or more before the stripe disappears into the general twinkling of color cells characteristic of the animal at rest.

Although escape has been written so strongly into the squid's design, the mollusk is not unduly timid. It attacks and overpowers living food such as crabs and small fish, and is able to open clams by sheer force. Each of the ten tentacles which surround the mouth is armed with a double row of strong suction cups which can be clamped to the prey. Like those of the octopus, every sucker has a powerful piston at the bottom for producing the vacuum needed, and the tentacles themselves are very flexible and muscular. Two of the arms are longer than the other eight, and are used in grasping fleeing food. They slow its progress until the rest of the squid's armament can be brought to bear. A parrot-like beak may be extended to tear at a captured fish, or the squid can use its rasping tongue to clean the meat from a crab's shell.

The ten arms are used also as a support when the animal rests on the ocean floor. Then the tentacles curve downward in a graceful arc, with their tips anchored to the bottom, while the squid's body is held horizontally or is allowed to sag until the tail touches the sand as well. On hard mud bottoms the tentacles may leave a ring of marks which show the outlines of their sides and suckers. Only very recently naturalists have recognized these squid tracks and seen in them the explanation of similar marks

on ancient shales and limestones. Ancestral squid lived and died but their soft bodies left no fossils. Yet tracks of them remain, and from their symmetry scientists have concluded that the early forms stood upended on the muds of long ago, ready to dart vertically upward at the first sign of danger.

A hungry squid swims about actively, often in company with others of its kind. By twisting the nozzle of the rocket mechanism, water can be squirted toward the rear to drive the animal ahead. Rapid progress in the forward direction depends on the same jet as does escape backward. The jet forms not only a propeller but also a steering mechanism. To change course, the spurting water is directed to one side and the head of the squid swings around without losing momentum. Fins near the pointed tail keep the creature on an even keel or control its diving and ascent, much as do the vanes on a submarine. But when the squid stops its jet propulsion and moves slowly through the water, the flexible edges of the fins undulate to drive the animal ahead or backward, to turn it from side to side and enable it to survey its surroundings.

Squid mothers hover in this way over their brood until the young are almost ready to emerge. The small transparent eggs are laid in little fingers of gray translucent gelatine, attached by the parent to some sunken support such as a rock or strong seaweed. The many near-by masses suggest bunches of bananas, grouped as they are into "hands." The newly hatched squid resembles the parent, but it is practically transparent except for its brown jaws, its amber-colored tongue, the dark pistons in its suction cups, its black eyes, and a few color cells. At first these color bags are scattered widely. They seem completely disproportionate on the tiny squid; yet they pulse and change the creature's appearance much as in the large, opaque adult.

Along the coasts of temperate seas, various kinds of squid reach a length of a foot or so. In southern Europe and in the Orient they are esteemed as food. Among the foreign-born population of our large cities there is considerable demand for both squid and small octopus.

In the colder waters of the North Atlantic between Newfoundland and Iceland, giant squid are encountered occasionally. Some of these are over fifty feet long, with tentacles a foot or more in diameter and suckers as large as coffee cups. Battles between these monsters and whales have been described, and many whales and giant sharks bear scars which show where the rows of strong suckers were clamped to their sides. Some of the more authentic accounts of sea serpents may spring from glimpses of these almost unbelievable animals.



THERE'S no denying the advantages of being a lyricist. It's showier than being a prose writer, makes a ream of paper go twice as far, and pays better, when it pays at all. Still, it's a different milieu.

There is in the lyric of the average popular song what I can only call a furtive quality. Things are hinted at that can never be explained, at least not explained respectably. Where the fiction writer goes to great pains to give you the background of his characters, the lyricist seems positively to avoid any pertinent data. Nobody in a song ever gives his right name. Actually, a process of critical synthesis has brought me to the realization that the world of the song lyric is actually the underworld — or, if you like, the half-world, the world of neurotic motivations and symptomatic behavior.

This all dawned on me while I was speculating about the going-home song, a type always well represented on the publishers' lists. The singer is represented as being tired of roaming, or roving, and anxious to get back, back, back to his home — i.e., his parents' home. I asked myself why there were no going-away-from-home songs; after all, every man who goes home must have left home. And come to that, what have these people been doing while they were away from home? Roaming, to be sure, roaming or roving; but that isn't very definite, is it? Barge captain? Vaudeville actor? Airline pilot? Itinerant peddler? You never know.

The mystery about leaving home, and about what the subject does while away, leads to the irresistible conclusion that he has been, to be brutally frank, on the lam. Trouble with the law would account pretty neatly for all this reticence. And this sickly enthusiasm for one's childhood home would fit into the picture, too. The emphasis on the wholesome, childhood diversions has a pietistic, worked-up air. What grown man would assert that he was going home to pick flowers, fish in the ole fishin' hole, and marry the sweetheart who was waiting for him — who but a man who was trying to put something over on a parole board?

One good way to start working up to a police record is to be born of overprotective parents. In

RUSSELL MALONEY is well known to *Atlantic* readers for his series of notes on the theater.

the world of the song lyric the silver cord is never cut. Put Mother all together, she spells O-E-D-I-P-U-S, and there's no other answer. The child of a song-lyric mother has been taken up too often in infancy, rocked to sleep, overfed, overpraised, and generally unfitted for any contact with reality. He's just the sort who winds up as a drugstore lounge, ready for any sort of criminal enterprise. Oh, nothing big at first; probably nothing worse than stealing tools from parked cars or plugging pay telephones. But sooner or later the day comes when Sonny Boy cashes a check that later proves to have been stolen from an apartment-house mailbox, and that's when he starts roaming, or roamin'.

The inability of song-lyric people to establish any sort of satisfactory and enduring relationships is, of course, classic. To be sure, they have pals, and they even have gals, but nothing good comes of this. The pal steals the gal, or the gal the pal, leaving the hero writhing with masochistic satisfaction. Among these misfits, a pal is simply a man with whom one happens to come in frequent contact — in the showers at the Y.M.C.A. residence, perhaps, or perhaps while nursing a beer at the corner saloon. A girl becomes a gal through the simple but fateful act of yielding to a plea for a good-night kiss. The good-night kiss is the ultimate in songland sex; first, hand-holding, then the ultimate surrender of the kiss in the doorway, after which it only remains to buy some furniture and start a bank account to put Junior and/or Sis through college.

Sometimes it is not the pal who snatches the gal away; it is a dim creature known in songland's John Doe terminology as "somebody else," or "somebody new." In our hero's poor warped mind, with its egocentric orientation, another individual is recognized only as "somebody else." There's no other word for him; to call him Harold Jones or William Cunningham would be an impossible feat of objective description. Anyway, our songster hears that his gal has been out dancing with somebody else and his whole universe totters. You see, in

his world engaged girls and married women go out with their fiancés or husbands or do not go out at all. And the gal, too, feels that in this dancing episode there is a strong element of strange, purple sin. She does not tell him, "While you were away on your last sales trip, William Cunningham took me tea-dancing at the Statler Hotel." No, she waits until "they" tell him — something that you can rely on them to do, those nameless little people who infest songland and spend their time gloating over doomed love affairs.

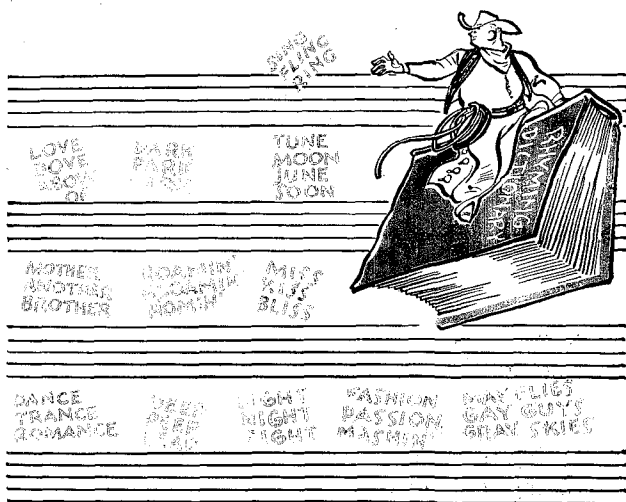
Hopeless love seems to be the only kind of trouble specifically referred to in songs. Other troubles are lumped in vaguely under the generic expression "gray skies." To be sure, skies are often gray in our own world, as in songland, but we never seem to feel the need of a euphemism. We say, "Wow! You ought to of seen the income tax installment I had to pay this month." We say, "I saw poor little Mrs. Jones at the Super-market this morning. She looks so worried, I guess her husband is drinking again" — not "I guess skies are gray over at the Joneses'." Lyric people, however, belong to the underworld, and in the underworld a thing is never called by its right name. A generalized enmity to law and order extends even to a mistrust of good English. Just as a detective becomes a dick, a revolver a roscoe, a prison the big house, so does any specific trouble become gray skies.

As far as any real trouble is concerned, there has never been a lyric character of anything like tragic stature — no Macbeth, no Samson, no Prometheus. You get the impression that the song person whose skies are gray is merely in need of a small loan or a visit to a chiropodist — or, at worst, a friendly go-between to square things with the desk man at the precinct station. And of course if the worst comes to the worst, a man can always go back, back, back to his childhood home and his Mammy; can, and usually does.

Portrait of an Artist

By MARGARET MacKENZIE

MACFINGALL lived, progressive to the core,
To blast all thinking of the day before —
Let a trend grow in favor, he forsook it;
But call a new pill doubtful and he took it.
Psychology, that spinning door of learning,
Had him at one time going and returning,
As theories on the mind, what forces move it,
Found his the self that rose each time to prove it.
By reasoning he showed that reason lied
And art was born when understanding died:
Straightway he saw that he must lose his reason,
Turned lunatic, and painted for a season
His self, bedeviled — though devils he employed
Had erstwhile worked for Bosch and, lately, Freud.
So, in the van, MacFingall ever tented
Within the man that other men invented.



Home, Squeezed Home

By EDWIN BATEMAN MORRIS

AT the moment an edifying simplicity controls a house design. Exterior aspect has reduced itself to three types: Cape Cod (to avoid the term Colonial), Contemporary (to avoid the term Modern), Ranch House (to avoid the term Et Cetera). Cape Cod has a roof which is visible, Contemporary has a roof which is not visible, Ranch House has a porch. That covers exterior.

Simplicity of plan is somewhat involved. The basic scientific and engineering principles governing present-day plan simplification are complicated. It is first a matter of firm elimination of dispensable, or nearly dispensable, spaces, and then compression. Engineering intent must come first. Sentimental reflections upon the reaction of humans to the houses slow up all processes. Careful laboratory conclusions show that a house designed upon the premise that the occupant must, without comment, fit himself to it is best. In the planning, therefore, the human factor is always eliminated.

The old conception of strictly unbroken rectangular rooms — dating to the knee breeches and silver buckle era — is gone. A room now may be any kind of polygon which increases dovetailing qualities — L-shaped, V-shaped, pie-shaped, pear-shaped, or of any other alphabetical or culinary form. Nature currently abhors a right angle.

These fresh and unhackneyed room shapings at times bring frivolous criticism from persons who affect to be displeased with the compressed charm of quaintly angled and many-sided rooms. The perfectly adapted circular plan with pleasant metal, tin-like exterior, they jestingly speak of as a can, with dull inference that there is a certain sardine significance imbedded in the idea.

But these many-purposed, many-angled, many-sided rooms have appeal. One thrills to the fall of light and shade on their trapezoids and mysteriously directed walls. One loves the informality of bulge in living room that indicates bar in kitchen, the off-angle exterior wall giving one at once a refreshing two-cocktail lift.

Inspired room forms and poetic partition directions spell spaciousness, rhythm, movement, restless excitement, the gripping surprise as in a suddenly dropped elevator. Technological developments have thus made available at low initial cost all the necessities for appealing, healthful living, by this compression within economical perimeter.

Man is entitled to the enjoyment of these higher living standards. He is entitled to simplified arrangements: three-sided bedrooms; houses hermetically sealed by glass — looking out on the view, if any. He is entitled to the benefits of pungent thinking

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which removes the outmoded porch and enables him to sit inside in health and sweet fresh air changed every eight minutes by a fan in the attic. These are his rightful heritages.

Technological inspiration has simplified his life. The modern house diagrams it for him. The wasteful rooms, the too many special places for living, have been forced out. Dead is the dull philosophy which furnished a children's room for youthful play and study, a library for quiet or for the special visitor, a living room for relaxation, a dining room solely for meals.

Rather, we seek now a smoothed-out pattern. The current diagram for man's life requires all kinds of living to go on in the same space. Preprandial and postprandial arrangements and table-settings mingle with the radio, the indoor velocipede, the Community Chest promoter, the theory of subtraction, the moaning of playing children, the high-key voice of the older issue telephoning from recumbent posture on the floor.

Such a picture of domestic felicity would have been impossible in an earlier epoch, when a blundering generation sought to segregate the sources of family contentment. It is the informality of the new telescoped living that gives it sweetness. There is no aloof space now for stuffy discussion and dull reading. One has to join in the moods of others.

A householder has no time for discontent, in the modernized, quaintly shaped space which is his spot for living — with blackboard on cocktail table, inner tube on rug, last year's hornet's nest against baseboard for possible juvenile scientific investigation.

For the first time in centuries life is prearranged, diagrammed, grooved. The master of the house stands beneath his rooftree. There is one place he can spend his waking moments at home — indoors in the combined living, dining, reading, smoking, play, and music room. Its round corners, acute angles, and many sides possibly give him a sense of pace, motion, infinite variety. But, whether they do or do not, that is his place and area — there isn't any other.

Harmonica

By HOWARD GRIFFIN

ALWAYS, no matter where it was —
whether the island camp, the landing beach —
after the dusk there would be this thin crying,
this shy unformed half-music in the night
calling to the dark,
calling to its own lost self.

Books and Men

ALDOUS HUXLEY

by CHARLES J. ROLO

1

ALDOUS HUXLEY surveys a nightmare world with “multiplicity of eyes”: scientific, economic, artistic, philosophic; the amused eyes of a man of sense and the religious eyes of a modern mystic. “Literature,” he says, “is also philosophy, is also science. In terms of beauty it enunciates truths.” Whether or not we agree with Huxley’s conclusions, we cannot fail to find, in his sardonic scrutiny of the *condition humaine*, a profusion of particular truths.

In the brilliant talk of Huxley’s characters, in those little essays which are so gracefully woven into the fabric of his fiction, all the values of our lunatic civilization are submitted to a scathing and informed assessment. One by one Huxley punctures the “highly inflated balloons” of human stupidity — the out-of-date beliefs and up-to-date substitutes for belief, the shams, prejudices, and pretensions of homo *soi-disant* sapiens. Turning a page in Huxley, you say, “There but for the grace of God. . . .” — and suddenly you wonder whether Divine Grace has intervened in time. “He writes,” a critic punned, “not that he who runs may read, but that he who reads may run.” Where to? The condemned playground or the contemplative’s oasis? You reads Huxley and you takes your choice.

Aldous Leonard Huxley was born on July 26, 1894, the third son (Julian, the scientist, being the eldest) of Dr. Leonard Huxley — teacher, editor, and man of letters — and of Julia Arnold, niece of the poet Matthew Arnold, and sister of the novelist Mrs. Humphrey Ward. Failing eyesight cut short

Huxley’s education at Eton and prevented him from becoming a doctor. Three years of almost total blindness, which spared him the conventional activities of English gentlemen, left him with a lasting bent for the reflective life. “My ambition and pleasure,” he once wrote, “are to understand, not to act.” Philip Quarles — the author-hero of *Point Counter Point* — reflects that his talent is not of the heart, the feelings, the sympathies. Huxley probably had in mind his own limitations. But this emotional aloofness is the source of other strengths — the sad clearness of vision, the colossal intellectual vitality, the corrosive spirit of analysis — which give to his work its special character.

As soon as Huxley could read through a magnifying glass, he went to Oxford, where he took First Class Honors. During the last two years of World War I, he worked in a government office. He was married to Maria Nys, a Belgian, in 1919, and there followed years of “all-devouring journalism”: music, art, and drama criticism, book reviews, articles on house decoration and architecture.

Two volumes of short stories and two novels established Huxley’s reputation before he was thirty. Preferring “sunlight to literary company,” he then settled in Italy for a number of years, and there formed a close friendship with D. H. Lawrence during the last part of Lawrence’s life. Since the middle thirties, the Huxleys have lived in the United States. Huxley’s output to date totals more than thirty volumes, plus prefaces, pamphlets, translations, and innumerable contributions to periodicals. “I never take a complete holiday,” he says, “as I find that my health breaks down as soon as I stop working. Holidays are healthful only to those who dislike their work. I find mine tolerably agreeable. My recreations are reading, painting, and traveling.”

A young author with many irons in the fire, CHARLES J. ROLO has lived in the United States since his graduation from Oxford a decade ago. *Atlantic* readers will remember the brilliant portrait of André Gide of which Mr. Rolo was co-author, and before that his war book, *Wingate’s Raiders*. He has edited a forthcoming omnibus volume of the works of Aldous Huxley, from which this essay is drawn.

"You are not your grandfather's *Enkel* for nothing," D. H. Lawrence once wrote to Aldous with reference to grandfather T. H. Huxley, ally of Darwin and scourge of theologians, who rained explosives on the "buttresses of superstition." T. H. Huxley bequeathed to his grandson's generation a disquieting scientific materialism and to Aldous what Lawrence called his "desperate courage of repulsion and repudiation," which fiercely repudiated "superstitions," old and new, but was also repelled by the fruits of science and presently repudiated materialism. Grandfather abandoned an experiment in vegetarianism because it diminished his mental firepower; his *Enkel*, agreeing that butcher's meat has martial properties, prescribes for that reason the Buddhist's diet of vegetables. In place of "superstition," T. H. Huxley offered Victorian England the scientist's consolation prize: inevitable progress. Aldous affirms that technological advance is spiritual regression to the death-without-tears of *Brave New World*. Against a community made safe for gadgets, he proposes a community made safe for God.

Lawrence's reference to Huxley's heredity today recalls his great-grandfather, Dr. Thomas Arnold, a formidable moralist, who sought to inject religious principle into literature and English school-boys; whose friends marveled, says Lytton Strachey, at his "absolute wrestling with evil." Dr. Arnold's great-grandson *has* injected religious principle into the modern novel and he too has wrestled with the problem of evil. It would seem that both ancestors have lived on and waged a fierce vendetta of ideas in the mortal coils of Aldous Huxley — skeptic, moralist, and artist.

2

PASSION and reason, self-division's cause" is a persistent Huxleian theme and a key to his own work. His sympathies, he disclosed in an essay on Pascal, leaned even then (1927) towards the moralist and mystic. His reason, which found the positivist role "only too easy to play," was on Grandfather Huxley's side of the fence. It spoke for that "second me," of which Alphonse Daudet once said: "The second me, I have never been able to intoxicate, to make shed tears, to lull to sleep. And how it delves into things, and how it mocks!"

When Huxley came of age, human behavior, it seemed to the modernist, was entirely explicable in terms of Libido, Instinct, glandular function, or conditioned reflex. Science and psychology had substituted for the Absolute the atom, for the soul the

complex, for virtue and vice the inscrutable hormone. It was by a "conjuring trick," Huxley concluded (in the essay on Pascal), that man, out of his longing for certainty and justification, had deduced "all the Gods and Goods, all the Truths and Beauties . . . of a bewildered humanity." But to the Pascalian, the materialist's picture of man and the cosmos was squalid and incomplete. While repudiating the Gods and Goods, Huxley implicitly continued to search for them, applying to the task an integrity that bit like acid through illusion, sentimentality, and convention. All his work is a quest for values in the face of skepticism battering at the vitals of belief; for meaning amid the pointlessness; for freedom amid the "fact of slavery" — bondage to institutions, to time and the ego, to the limitations of a body "at the mercy of skin and mucus. At the mercy of those thin threads of nerve."

The rebellious skeptic is a wrecker of false idols. The Pascalian, surveying the barren altars, is a rebel against "Omnipresent Nil." This mocking, half-detached desolation is a corrosive solvent to satire. Huxley's is pitched in a variety of keys. There is a terrible farce. There is despairing buffoonery like that of the "mild and melancholy" Gumbriel (*Antic Hay*), who puts on cloak and beaver to play the "Complete Man," who stifles his frustration in learned chatter about the "marriage ceremonies of octopuses." But as with Hume when he despaired of philosophy, "cheerfulness keeps breaking in." Then Huxley's wit sparkles and stings; his fancy cuts elegant capers.

Contrast being the mainspring of satire, the ideal construction for the satirist is one that holds the reader, not so much by the sequence of events in time (the story), as by the startling effects that result from viewing related events simultaneously. Music achieves these effects by its abrupt transitions. The Diabelli variations, for example, contain the "whole range of thought and feeling, yet in organic relation to a ridiculous little waltz tune." Huxley's most important innovation as a craftsman has been the partial replacement of *story* with *music*.

All the novelist needs for the abrupt transitions is a "sufficiency of characters and parallel, contrapuntal plots." In *Antic Hay*, while Shearwater the physiologist is playing guinea pig in an absurd experiment, his neglected wife plays Madame Bovary on Mercaptan's Crébillon-haunted sofa and in the terrifying embrace of Coleman, the bearded Diabolist. While his father, an architect, translates his dreams into models of grandiose cities, Gumbriel dreams up ads for his pneumatic trousers.

Another musical form Huxley has used as effec-

tively as counterpoint is *modulation*, achieved in prose by showing "several people falling in love, or dying or praying in different ways — dissimilars solving the same problem. Or vice versa." *Those Barren Leaves* modulates between the parallel amours of a middle-aged romanticist, an elderly cynic and a moron, two ingenuous twenty-year-olds and three self-conscious intellectuals. Another way is to "consider the events of the story in their various aspects — emotional, scientific, religious, metaphysical, etc." Juxtapose, for example, acoustics and the music of Bach — as in the simultaneously aesthetic and scientific account of a concert in *Point Counter Point*; juxtapose spiritual pretensions and economic facts — as when Burlap (in the same novel) interrupts his apostrophes to "Lady Poverty" to advise, expertly, on gramophone shares; juxtapose sex and philosophy — as when Calamy, the hero of *Those Barren Leaves*, in an entr'acte between love-making, discourses on the different modes in which his hand exists. Thus seen, reality looks exceedingly queer. Hence the pervading quality of irony in Huxley's work.

From the neat antithesis to the odd and laughter-provoking word or phrase, the suggestive name, the satiric portrait — Huxley commands every device of the comic artist. You can almost guess from the sound of their names the bombast of Casimir Lypiatt, the would-be Titan; the stoatishness of Mr. Stoyte; the Wildean propensities of Beppo Bowles; the foibles of Lady Gible and Baron Badgery. And Pasteur Mercaptan, the mannered aesthete with the rococo boudoir and the perfumed style — how appropriate that he should bear the name of a group of colorless fluids having (says Webster) "a strong, repulsive garlic odor."

Perhaps the most accomplished caricaturist in English prose of our time, Huxley puts human flummery and pretentiousness on parade in a crowded gallery of portraits, drawn with atrocious raillery or polite malice. Often the portrait is achieved in a single epigrammatic phrase, the absurdity of a personage is compressed into a mannerism or physical peculiarity. Molly d'Exergillod — "a professional athlete of the tongue"; Grace Peddley — "She was almost too hospitable — she kept open bed, you know"; Spandrell — "When he smiles, it's like an appendicitis operation with ironical corners."

"Everyone's a walking tragedy and a walking farce at the same time. The man who slips on a banana skin and fractures his skull describes against the sky, as he falls, the most richly comic arabesque." Huxley has an extraordinary capacity to distil vials of wrathful humor out of things which

he also regards as horrible. Modern man, modern civilization, fracturing their skulls on the banana skins of stupidity, success-worship, and lust for power, describe, against Huxley's skyline, a richly comic arabesque.

3

THE chief defeat of the novel of ideas," says Philip Quarles, "is that you must write about people who have ideas to express — which excludes all but about .01 percent of the human race." Huxley's characters, though individualized by satiric detail, are essentially embodiments of an attitude, mouthpieces for a set of ideas. The central figure is almost invariably a writer, a Hamlet-like intellectual, who articulates Huxley's opinions and dilemmas. His foil is the sentimentalist in reverse (Spandrell, Chelifer, Mark Staithes), at once hypnotized and sickened by everyday reality, who, like today's Existentialist hero, makes a cult of his "nausea." Other recurring types are: the disenchanting siren, forever confronted with "steppes of ennui" and the certainty that "tomorrow will be as awful as today" (Myra Viveash, Lucy Tantamount, etc.); the Victorian materialist (Mr. Scogan, Gumbriel Sr., Mr. Cardan), a genial figure for whom Huxley seems to have once had a nostalgic sympathy; the elderly pedant (Quarles Sr., Beavis Sr., Jeremy Pordage), whom his creator detests; the (surprisingly) ethereal mother-figure, who evokes the scent of lavender and the rustle of long skirts; and Huxley's *bête noire*, the type whose personality is simply an inflation of a single idea — life for passion's sake or for wit's sake or for art's sake. One more must be added: the man of wisdom (Mark Rampion, Dr. Miller, Mr. Propter, Bruno Rontini), who carries Huxley's positive message. Huxley himself has said that "people who can reel off neatly formulated notions aren't quite real. They're slightly monstrous." The admirable man in Huxley's novels tends to remain *vox et praeterea nihil* — sound without sense.

Each of the previous types represents a set of ideas which are debunked and are used to debunk others. Huxley's idol-smashing begins at home: the values of the intellectual and the artist are those he most systematically disparages. The so-called "higher life" of scholarship is simply "idea-mongering . . . a more complete escape from the responsibilities of living than alcohol or morphia. . . . Books are opium." When Denis, the young poet of *Crome Yellow*, holds forth on the beauty of words, Mr. Scogan suggests "a mental carminative." Art is "the last and silliest of the idols . . . the sweetest of the inebriants."

If you would worship at the shrine of Reason, Huxley will marshal precedents to show that "the madman not the philosopher appeals to what is fundamental, the passion and the instincts." As for the notion that Marxist or technological revolution brings liberty — it is, says Mr. Bojanus, the greatest "swindle 'atched in the 'ole of 'istory!" Idealism, says Huxley, is usually the "noble toga that political gentlemen drape over their will to power." Fame-seeking? "Compared with it pure sensuality is all but harmless." And Christianity? In America it seems to have been transformed "from a religion . . . into a system for the justification of wealth and the preachment of industrious respectability; from a system that condemned the Pharisee . . . into one that exalts the Pharisee above every other human type."

There is some justice in one critic's quip that Huxley makes the worst of both worlds. He uses science and psychology to debunk values rooted in the stubborn stupidity of custom and simultaneously mocks at the conceits of the new gospels. "Filippo Lippi," he writes, "once had a bump of art. He is now an incestuous homosexualist with a bent toward anal-eroticism. . . . Fifty years from now . . . the current explanation [will be] something more fundamental even than faeces and infantile incestuousness." "Dream," says Gumbriel to a meretricious poet. "The word is inadmissible. It's altogether too late in the day. Dreams . . . they belonged to the Rostand epoch. *Le rêve* — *ah!* Now the word merely connotes Freud." It's also a bit late in the day for love. "If you aren't in love," says Calamy, "it's a mere experiment in applied physiology. . . . But if you are, it means that you become enslaved . . . in a way that's positively disgraceful." Love as *Liebe-Triebe*, *Cuore-Dolore* to the modernist is pretty disgraceful. And love as applied physiology — at best, "twin cannibals in bedlam"; more often, merely a relief for "itch and ennui," or, as Helen Ledwidge says, "just hygiene."

Science which equates love and applied physiology, masterpieces and faeces, which informs the poet that his "mind sublime [is] issued from the monkey's womb" — science itself dances a pretty pointless jig in Huxley's books. The laboratory in *Antic Hay* portrays the futility of the scientist's cosmos: "The cock into which Shearwater had engrafted an ovary came out, not knowing whether to crow or cluck. The beetles, who had had their heads cut off and replaced by the heads of other beetles, darted uncertainly about, some obeying their heads, some their genital organs." Shearwater himself, imprisoned in a Hot Box, is nightmarishly

pedaling away on a stationary bicycle — to discover the effects of prolonged sweating. The data of such experiments are the only truths the modernist can accept, yet what do they tell him in terms of the Gods, the Goods, the Beauties they have displaced? "What's he to Hecuba?" chant the minstrels in a nightclub where Gumbriel and Myra Viveash are dancing. And dolefully they answer, "Nothing at all."

Unable to pay homage to the traditional values, unable to see in the laws of science more than "stammering provisional theories" about *one* part of reality, Huxley has for twenty-five years grappled with the problem of the moral vacuum. It is a problem that is focal to our time, as evidenced by the popularity of such books as Liebman's *Peace of Mind*, du Noüy's *Human Destiny*, Wylie's *Essay on Morals* — best-sellers all; and by the palsy of the modern hero, a man "things are done to," as Wyndham Lewis wrote of Hemingway's heroes. The father-figure who laid down the law has been largely replaced either by the Kafkaesque son in search of a father, in search of the law; or by the escapist seeking, to quote Cyril Connolly's inspired pun, "a womb with a view." Wombland to the right, Anarchy to the left. Connolly goes on to enshrine the modernist's dilemma in the despairing aphorism: "Everything is a dangerous drug except reality, which is unendurable." How, then, should one live? Where to turn for principle?

4

THROUGHOUT Huxley's books one theme, which recurs crescendo, hints at the nature of the final solution. From the start, Huxley mobilized his prodigious intellectual virtuosity to puncture the "pathetic belief" in rationalism, in the values of the intellect as opposed to the animal senses and the spirit. Reason, weaker than passion, is a sorry guide to conduct — "Five words sum up every biography: *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*." Man often sees the good but needs must love the lowest. Still less can reason furnish an answer to the fundamental mysteries or explain away soul in terms of body, mind in terms of matter. "When you reflect that it's the human mind," says Calamy, "that has invented space, time and matter, picking them out of reality in a quite arbitrary fashion — can you attempt to explain a thing in terms of something it has invented itself?" God as $2 + 2 = 4$, Gumbriel reflects in chapel. It just won't do. It was therefore to "Divine unreason" that Huxley looked for the "lost purpose and the vanished good." But

deciding to inhabit the mystic's oasis, he cultivated a variety of gardens.

Crome Yellow (1921), Huxley's first novel, introduces one of his main themes: the inadequacy as a human being of the self-conscious intellectual. *Antic Hay* (1923) dramatizes in terms of life the implications of scientific materialism. Disoriented by science, like the beetles on which Shearwater has engrafted new heads, Huxley's men and women pointlessly "dance the antic hay," trying to give Nil the slip in infantile pleasures and pursuits. But even in the early twenties, there existed in Huxley a core of mystical feeling. Gumbriel becomes conscious in the night of a "crystal quiet . . . inexpressibly lovely," an interior universe in which the demon Nil is exorcised. It is this universe that Calamy (*Those Barren Leaves*) decides to explore in solitude, hoping that he may "burrow [his] way right through the mystery [to] some kind of truth, some explanation."

In *Point Counter Point* (1928) Huxley repudiated mysticism, to which he returned eight years later, and championed a doctrine of "life-worship" inspired by the Greeks, by Blake, and the "noble savagery" of D. H. Lawrence, after whom the character of Mark Rampion is modeled. *Point Counter Point* is a richer orchestration of the themes in Huxley's earlier work. Lord Edward Tantamount epitomizes the futility of science; hatching "asymmetrical tadpoles" in a glass tank is as irrelevant to the problems of living as Shearwater's pointless pedaling. His assistant, Illidge, a militant Communist, is one of several variations on the theme of self-division: his Communism is rooted in Marxian determinism, which, as a scientist, he knows to be fifty years out of date. Walter Bidlake is another victim of "passion and reason." He is obsessively in love with Lucy, who reintroduces the bitch motif. She is a sadistic reincarnation of Myra Viveash (*Antic Hay*), hell-bent on giving Nil the slip in progressively intenser pleasures.

The trouble with Lucy and Walter and the rest — Spandrell, the "little Stavrogin," Burlap, the fake Franciscan, Webley, the strutting führer — is, says their creator, that they are not in any real sense adults. Walter is a mother's boy who sobs on the shoulder of one mistress and worships at the feet of another. Spandrell's sadism is a childish revenge on his mother for her second marriage. Webley is still playing soldiers. Lucy is still pulling legs off flies — her victims happen to be lovesick young men. Burlap enjoys nothing better than a romp in the bathtub with the frightened virgin he has seduced. They are representatives of an age that "invented Peter Pan and raised that monstrosity of arrested

development to the rank of an ideal" — the ideal that caused Scott Fitzgerald to write bitterly: "There are no second acts in American lives." Arrested development (or prolonged infantilism), which Hollywood has made epidemic, now engages the attention even of the mass magazines, which have subventioned psychiatrists to analyze the bull market in divorce and neurosis. Prolonged infantilism is becoming recognized as the *mal du siècle*, a less class-conscious palsy than the romantic spleen of an era that had not yet unearthed and contaminated the "little man."

Self-division, infantilism is the harsh "point" to which the "wholeness" of Mark Rampion provides the answering counterpoint. The Good Life he preaches is a synthesis of reason, feeling, and instinct, which harmonizes and includes the claims of body and heart as well as of intellect and spirit.

This remains the official doctrine of Huxley until *Eyeless in Gaza*. Huxley himself expressed doubts as to whether taste and instinct did not make him "congenitally incapable" of giving the Lawrencean emphasis to heart and blood. Although he wrote at this time a caustic essay about Swift's hatred of the body — "the harmless necessary trips" — Huxley's books suggest that he himself is easily repelled by physical phenomena. There is a strong element of shame and *Schaudern* in most of his sex scenes. Illness in its mildest forms fills him with nausea. And when he quotes Odo of Cluny's reference to the body as a "bag of muck," one suspects that he does not entirely disagree with the fastidious Bishop.

Brave New World (1932) is not so much a book of prophecy as a fable which satirically dramatizes the choice between a return to primitivism (advocated by Lawrence) and forward march toward the scientific and industrialized Utopia. The Savage is clearly speaking for Huxley when he fiercely repudiates the Brave New World. But the conclusion shows it's too late in the day for noble savagery.

5

HUXLEY's first statement of a personal religion, arrived at by direct experience and therefore immune to skeptical erosion, appears in *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936). The title refers to Samson, blind and a slave, who with God's strength tore down the house of the Philistines. In brief, Huxley preaches "non-attachment" as the means to union with the spiritual reality underlying the phenomenal world — "a form of life more intense . . . richer and of finer quality than ordinary life." "Good," Anthony

Beavis reflects, "is what makes for unity. . . . Evil is the accentuation of division. Pride, hatred, anger — the essentially evil sentiments . . . because they are all intensifications of separateness." Huxley's credo is therefore also pacifist. Since separateness is the condition of individual life, evil is inherent in reality on the human level. But there is a way — that of the contemplatives — of transcending separateness, which is rooted in selfhood. Huxley warns, however, that "the contemplative life can be made a kind of high-brow substitute for Marlene Dietrich; a subject for erotic musings in the twilight. Meditation — valuable only as a means for effecting desirable changes in the mode of existence."

Paradoxically, the discovery of a faith leads Huxley to cultivate what André Gide called the "art of being disagreeable." The satire is hereafter more bitter; each of the characters, with few exceptions, achieves a detestable perfection in his particular brand of rottenness. The harsh point of *Eyeless in Gaza* is the gruesome description of Helen's abortion, the tragic suicide of Brian Foxe, the hideous amputation performed on Mark Staithes, the symbolism of a dog that falls from a passing plane, drenching in its blood two naked lovers on a rooftop. Such events belong, says Huxley elsewhere, "to the very essence of the world in which we elect to live." By intensifying the harshness of the point, he points up the nemesis that waits on wrongdoing.

"Mysticism?" Huxley quotes a certain Eminence as saying. "What you mean is misty schism." The prelate was doubtless concerned with dogma, but the pun has its point in reference to literature. For mistiness is inescapable when what the writer wishes to express is inexpressible. "The only vocabulary at our disposal," says Mr. Propter in Huxley's next novel, *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*, "is a vocabulary primarily intended for thinking strictly human thoughts about strictly human concerns. What *we* want to talk about are non-human realities." The writer seeking to convey mystical *experience* to the non-mystic is in the position of someone trying to describe music to a man born deaf. And that is only one half of Huxley's dilemma. The other half is the problem of integrating message and story, of devising a dramatic interplay between the mystic, whose characteristics are serenity and non-attachment, and unregenerate men and women, whose characteristics are excitement and craving — which, as Huxley pointed out in *Brave New World*, constitute the raw material of nine tenths of all art. From the writer's point of view, mystic and non-mystic are almost as

fire and water. They may meet but they cannot easily be made to mix, and it seems unlikely that they would be inclined to mate. Huxley has stated the problem with candor; he has not, for all his prodigious command of ways and means, solved it. The contemplative sage in the last two novels plays a marginal role. The novel, as a work of art, suffers from marginalia.

6

HUXLEY's mystical-pacifist credo and its social implications are first set forth in detail in *Ends and Means* (1937). The social context most congenial to the ideal of non-attachment is, Huxley argues, decentralization and self-government in politics and industry — genuine democracy as opposed to state socialism or capitalism, which concentrate power in the hands of political and economic bosses.

After Many a Summer Dies the Swan (1940) is a lively story about man's age-old wish to live forever, with digressions on time and the ego as a moral reading on the text. Good, Mr. Propter explains, exists below the human level, as proper functioning of the animal organism (roughly Lawrence's credo); and above it, on the level of spirit, as the experience of eternity, the knowledge of God — "a being [Huxley quotes Tauler's definition] withdrawn from creatures, a free power, a pure working." Good lies outside of time, which is the very "raw material of evil"; outside of personality. Ideals are "merely the projection, on an enormously enlarged scale of some aspect of personality" — the sacrifice of one set of personal passions for another set — and therefore the work of the devil. "It's a matter of experience and observation," says Mr. Propter, "that most idealism leads to war, persecution and mass insanity." This theme Huxley exemplifies in *Grey Eminence* (1940), the life of Father Joseph, Cardinal Richelieu's alter ego, and in his last novel, *Time Must Have a Stop* (1944).

It is not uncommon to hear Aldous Huxley spoken of, even by *aficionados*, as a sophisticated debunker who, having plumbed the depths of nihilism, made a jet-propelled take-off into the mystical stratosphere. This opinion is, I think, partly due to the fact that fashion, which so rapturously press-agented Huxley's early novels, has in the long run done him an injustice. The shadow of the Pascalian was not reflected in the portrait of the *enfant terrible* which fashion, in the twenties, painted in its own image. The "unshakeable sophistication" which delighted Mencken and Scott Fitzgerald still gives glitter to Huxley's thought. But "unshakeable sophistication," coupled with

"amateur in garbage," "cynic in ragtime," "fastidious sensualist" (I quote from early reviews), conjures up a Michael Arlen, a Carl Van Vechten — an elegant trifler engaged, like Paul Morand, in compiling a Baedeker of the boudoir and cosmopolitan vice.

A review of Huxley's adventures in negation and belief shows that he was never satisfied with garbage collecting and the smashing of idols; that early in his career he "chased the absolute in remote strange regions" and seemed on the point of embracing mysticism at the conclusion of *Those Barren Leaves*. The skeptical aesthete of the twenties had faced God and detected a "conjuring trick"; but he failed to outface man's need for a God. Skeptic, aesthete, satirist, stylistic virtuoso, encyclopedia of scientific fact, columnist of the "family gossip known as Culture," amateur of the fantastic, and expert in human folly — Huxley has been all of these things. But his energizing impulse has always

been, as it is now, preoccupation with the spirit of man.

The two Huxley brothers stand — as did their eminent ancestors — at two extreme destinations which the intellectual can reach in an age allergic to belief and uneasy in doubt. For Julian, "Freud in combination with Darwin suffices." For Aldous, without divine Reality, life is a "tale told by an idiot." The tale his books tell is a twentieth-century Pilgrim's Progress, in which Darwin, Freud, and their colleagues patrol the frontier between the realm of ape-men and the free state of God-men. He describes, in richly comic arabesques, the antics of a generation which thinks itself to be the ape's offspring, a monkey on a string agitated by animal instinct. He echoes our frustrations, articulates our dilemmas, chronicles our struggle with the Janus-headed monster that has Time on one face and Ego on the other. He has come close to writing a biography of the ideas of modern man.



THE REVIEWING OF BOOKS

by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

1

THE founding of a new literary magazine is like setting up a feeding table for winter birds trying to survive until spring. They arrive by flocks from all the neighboring thickets and soon are squabbling for crumbs. So it is with literary aspirants who want reviewing. In New York, from tenements and lofts, from shared apartments and from the best uptown addresses; from Syracuse, Bangor, and Spartansburg (just arrived), they hurried by foot or taxi to the reception room of the *Saturday Review*, each with a good reason why a book (almost any book) should be given to them for review.

Most of this swarm were not prospective or even

potential critics. The girls and boys (many of them were only that) who came to us were writing novels, short stories, or plays, and only hoped to earn a few dollars and get their names in print while they waited for an acceptance or a try-out. Many of them were very able, but usually not in our direction. Most of them had only two qualifications for reviewing: they liked to read and could write a passable English. Ninety-nine out of a hundred among the young had a fixed (and fallacious) belief: if you could not get your own books published, you could at least tell what was wrong with the books other authors had written.

I was sympathetic with the slightest budding creative talent. Yielding to fresh young faces (charming girls in particular), for a while I dealt out lesser novels for experimental reviewing. The results were devastating. If the review was favorable it was pointless; if it was pointed it was savage. I did not realize then how much easier it is to damn than to praise with any effectiveness. I

A graduate of Yale who taught English at his Alma Mater, and who has been from its beginning the Chairman of the Board of Judges of the Book-of-the-Month Club, HENRY SEIDEL CANBY moved from the academic world into publishing in 1924, when he became the Editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. This is the third article drawn from Dr. Canby's forthcoming book, *American Memoir*, which Houghton Mifflin will publish in mid-August.

was not then aware of the primitive cruelty of the young intellectual's mind, or how the hidden self-distrusts of an unformed personality could be soothed by aggressiveness or impudence. After a year or so of this service to the youth movement, we had accumulated a vast stock of unpublishable reviews.

Criticism and reviewing are, of course, two quite different arts. Criticism values and sets in perspective a seasoned work of art which is ready to be placed in its relation to literary history. Reviewing need do no more than describe and define a current book, with an opinion as to its merits. Criticism requires an erudition and a trained judgment no youth is likely to possess. Yet reviewing books puts strong tests to the intelligence, since the reader of an unpublished book must rely on his own reactions. Unlike the scholar at work upon the past, he has no absolute knowledge as to whether he is reading a failure or a success. His book as yet has no history. But such problems never troubled our aspirants. They were all Davids asking for a sling and a Goliath to pop at.

2

I HAD not been long in New York before I discovered that Grub Street was still a reality. Today it is lined with expensive apartment houses inhabited by ghost writers and the more successful anthologists; but in the early twenties it was more like its ancient hack-infested predecessor in London. In New York's symbolic Grub Street lived a race of professional reviewers. Those who worked for us were elderly and must have long since gone to an endless rest for tired eyes and bruised typewriter fingers. For they worked hard. Reviewing should be an avocation or a by-product of the study of literature, but these honest hacks made a job of it which was poorly paid by cash and salable books.

One reviewer I remember particularly introduced mass production into the business. Well educated, with an encyclopedic mind that never lifted above the level of competence, he had too little personality to teach, too little originality for research, and too much real love of books to go elsewhere for a living. But he had to live and support his family, so he set up a factory of reviewing, feeding to his intelligent wife and daughters armfuls of books, some from us, more from the Sunday supplements. He was the foreman and reviser, and the reviewer of the more difficult volumes. He was most useful to us in the days when

we tried to review everything, but I doubt whether his whole establishment earned as much as \$75 a week.

It was seldom dull in our reception room. We could count upon at least one paranoiac a week. I do not mean paranoiacs in the strict medical sense, though a few of them were definitely crazy. Our would-be reviewers of this kind were obsessed creatures of one idea, which they tried to sell us. There is something about writing that attracts such brains, and something about criticism that has an especial appeal. Criticism gives to the obsessed mind a long-sought opportunity to avenge the fancied wrongs of a warped ego upon a society to which it has never been able to adjust itself. Nor is this neurotic desire to be found only in the unbalanced. Pope with his twisted body made it into an art of abuse.

Some of these erratic men were dangerous. I was nearly strangled by an expert in early history because I had given the book he wanted to a rival historian. I escaped only by dodging into the crowded traffic of 45th Street. Others were pathetic, such as the old and rummy composer of excellent sonnets, who would sit for hours muttering to himself in an anteroom while I worked behind a locked door. The stenographers were afraid to pass him in order to go home. Sometimes it was not paranoia at all but the calculated malice of Job, who wished that his adversary had written a book. A critic of rising reputation once got from my innocent hands the new novel of an established writer. When he finished the review, there was little left of the book but the dust cover, and we, at the time fanatic upholders of free speech, published it as written. Later I was told that the reviewer was kicked downstairs by the author in a Greenwich Village brawl!

Never paranoiac, but too often intolerably dull, were the scholars, the masters of those who know, whom we were determined to draft for the education of our reading public. If the advisability of interesting others occurred to them, the result seldom showed in what they wrote. Many of the academics then were good lecturers, but when they reviewed they reviewed for each other, and the public be damned. Many a great authority would write ten words on the value of the book he was reviewing, and a thousand on minor errors and misprints. Or still more frequently, he would devote his space to telling how he would have written the book.

In politics, economics, and history we did better, for these were the years of controversy over the causes of World War I and the imperatives of

reconstruction. The scholars in government, economics, and the sociology of change were aware of the absolute necessity of influencing public opinion. They learned to write effectively if they were not already skillful, and if they failed in their great cause it was not because of a halting rhetoric. Indeed, the curious may find in the files of the *Saturday Review* for the twenties, and in many another periodical of the times, a convincing analysis of what was bound to happen in a world weary of war but still bogged down in nationalism.

What we remember is how few books and how few competent reviewers there were on military or naval tactics and strategy, or on the broader questions of how democracy might win World War II if it came. Yet the fault was not in the direction but in the tempo of our thinking. We were not rid of war; yet we insisted upon concentrating on the problems of peace. We were busy tearing up the roadblocks while mines were still under the pavement. We said good-bye to force while forgetting original sin. All this the books of that time make clear now, but it was not so then.

3

SCIENCE, both pure and applied, and the fellow travelers of science, psychology and sociology, were also intensely productive in the twenties. And, as it happened, in the field of scientific scholarship we scored one success that had the elements of the sensational. This was in the early days of the *Saturday Review*.

I had met in England, while doing some work for the Society for Pure English, C. K. Ogden, whose career since has been extraordinary. He has already published somewhere his account of the following incident. A psychologist, a physicist, a philologist, and I do not know what else, he lived in the twenties on the lower floors of a London house crammed with gadgets such as machines for running records backward so that the hearers could analyze the rhythms, and astonishing electrical devices. It was not to see those that I called upon him, but to discuss the now famous Basic English, for which I. A. Richards, the critic, and he were responsible.

The range of his knowledge of new thought and investigation was unequalled in my experience — it was truly incredible. And so I thought of him as a reviewer when, in 1926, an interim edition (the 13th) of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was brought out in three volumes to be added to the pre-war complete edition of 1911. The idea was

to bring us up to date in all important knowledge of what had happened in the world since 1911. Mr. Ogden was fortunately in New York, and agreed to undertake a review from which a university faculty might have shrunk. He asked only a free hand and sufficient space — and got both.

I remember his light figure as he hurried into the office almost at the deadline, with an armful of manuscript. A few pages were enough to show that it was a massacre. The editors of the edition, unwilling to delay, had shoved wads of new material into an old reference book with an insufficient consideration of new fields of developing knowledge and new men. The resulting omissions were startling. Ogden's review was a survey of the new thoughts, new procedures, and new talents which had been overlooked. It listed names which were clearly of primary importance, and discoveries and discoverers that I knew to be indispensable for a reference book, yet were not even recorded in the index of the three volumes. As the proofs came up we began to throw out reviews, articles, poems, then whole departments from the number in order to get space, until finally the week's issue was chiefly Ogden — a brilliant, devastating criticism of a reference work about as useful in some of its important sections as a 1911 telephone book.

A few weeks later the vice-president of the American branch of the *Britannica* (it has changed ownership since) came to my office. He was sorry to make trouble but he feared that they would have to sue the *Saturday Review* and its editor for libelous statement. They had suffered heavy financial damage from that review. "But you know," I said, "that the courts have ruled that a review, no matter how hurtful to a book's reputation, is not actionable unless it contains malicious misstatement. Otherwise there could be no criticism." "Yes, of course," he replied, "but we shall sue you for maliciously choosing an incompetent man to review a great work. That is cause for an action."

Many times I have been challenged by this or that and have thought of the right answer only hours later, and too late. This time I was ready. "If Mr. Ogden is incompetent, why did your editor choose him to write the article on psychology for this edition?" We were not sued!

The modernist critics invaded our office frequently (the verb is exact) with lightning in their eyes and grenades in either hand. They wished to upset all the old categories and set up new ones, and they wished us to help them do this before the end of the month. The war had disturbed old values, though in the early twenties it had not produced, at least in the United States, a recogniz-

ably new literature. Yet readers of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* in 1922 were aware that something new (in talent as well as in values) had come into English.

It was difficult to tell from what they wrote just what our modernists wanted, since they were more eager to attack other modernists than to blast accepted books. Yet one thing was clear: like Walt Whitman in 1855, they felt that the diction of current art was inadequate to express new sets of experience. So far they had little to say, though much to feel, and there were no T. S. Eliots among them. The sayers in this country were the E. A. Robinsons, the Robert Frosts, the Willa Cathers, whose roots were in our age of confidence, and who were summing up magnificently the results for our day of the great American experiment.

The controversy of the ideologies, which was not to reach its peak until the 1930's, nor to translate itself into action until the preliminaries of the Second World War, was already beginning. But my modernist callers did not want to live their lives differently; they wished to find new ways of describing how people they did not like lived their lives. Some of them were wild men (I had met their confreres in the London world) whose restlessness was more significant than anything they wrote about it. Others, like Paul Rosenfeld, Malcolm Cowley, and Kenneth Burke, were to build distinguished careers on intuitive recognitions of new trends in the art of literature, forecasting new tastes.

I myself was deeply sympathetic but puzzled and skeptical. Change was coming, but it did not seem wise or right for a magazine like ours to proclaim a new age which clearly had not arrived. Also I thought that new ways of estimating the imagination of man were reflections of profound changes in our attitude toward God, Fate, and our fellow man. The new semi-science of psychology was already indicating that such a turn in man's long road was ahead of us. But were these restless prophets, who were not themselves creative

artists like T. S. Eliot, able to see beyond their own dogmatisms? I was dubious because of my own past experience when, in company with many another literary historian, I had trotted after Brunetière and his philosophy of literary evolution only to land in a swamp of bad criticism based on ill-comprehended science. I had my choice: to be labeled conservative or radical—and chose to be called conservative; an interesting experience, for in New Haven I had always been, and still was, regarded as radical. But conservative in this sense only: that I decided our chief function was intelligent teaching, and that we would let the vigorous "little magazines" of the day conduct the reconnaissance, since what was said there could be written for professionals who alone at that stage would find much of it intelligible.

We chose to keep the emphasis of the *Saturday Review* upon books of high artistic value (fortunately there were many of them) which were not only successful in their art but were being read by the intelligent public. Modernist prophecy we in no way suppressed, but set it in the back of the magazine, and published much prose and verse from abroad as well as at home—which in our opinion gave samples of the future. And we offered a column now and then even to the wild men. Ezra Pound, who was going wild by this time, agreed to do some prophesying, but characteristically sent in comments on a local and not important art show instead—and was abusive when not paid twice our rates. Our readers were sufficiently warned of rough water ahead, and told of new types of genius appearing. As I look back, I think our compromise was right. In these early twenties Americans were writing books that no change of taste is likely to exclude from our permanent literature. What the Frosts and Glasgows were publishing was finished art representing a great period of American life at its peak, even if, perhaps, nearing its end. By the 1930's the story would be different. A critic's (or a reviewer's) first job is to estimate, not to prophesy.



THE ATLANTIC

Bookshelf



THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

BY EDWARD WEEKS

OVERHEAD the oak leaves stir against the cloudless blue, and the shadow in which I am reading ripples like running water. At my feet on the borderline between the sunny and the cool grass lies Mickey dozing, gray muzzle pointed toward the driveway up which the family will return from their expedition. Periodically he rouses himself, shakes the catkins from his black curls, and moves closer to the sun. His movement renews the scolding of the mother robin in the bittersweet and interrupts my intake of print. I watch him, and through the forming impressions of the book in my lap, memory thrusts its feeling.

This is probably our last summer together. Mickey is sixteen and that is a great age for a cocker spaniel given to eating any old thing; indeed a great age for any dog. Implicit in every friendship is the trust that it will never break. Mick has no reason to doubt us, but we who note his fading hearing and his inability to spot us at any distance on the beach live with the warning to make these months good.

I remember William Morton Wheeler's remarking on the silent communication between dogs, and how, when he had taken one of his for a walk through the Arboretum, the others would gather about the traveler instantly on his return and by scent and emanation have all the news in a matter of seconds. On the Common with other dogs Mick is eager, quivering, and gregarious when I am along, and hair-on-end belligerent when accompanying his mistress. In canine years he is now well past

the century mark, so it is small wonder that dogs in their prime have only a passing curiosity in what he has to say. They pause, there is the usual tail-wagging introduction. Then, while he is still standing on his dignity, they suddenly lope off. Mick will start after and then resign himself to his own grass, which he scratches up with a "What the hell." For ladies he has, I gather, the charm of an aging colonel. There is a honey-colored spaniel who, after the nosing, will describe mad circles about him as he stands immovable on the moonlit Common. But if she pushes him too roughly he loses his balance and shows his lip, and so they part.

At home his expressions are stressed for our benefit. His humor, as when with jaws open and tongue half a yard out he stands there grinning; his sneeze of expectation; his mutter — a kind of controlled yip — of annoyance; his jumping recognition of those most important words in a city dog's vocabulary, "going out" and "down country" (is it the special note that colors our voices as we say them?); his sharp demanding bark when his water dish is empty or when brownies, his passion, are cooking — these are a language no one could miss. So too his boredom when, after a decent interval in our friend's house, he fetches his leash and stands obdurate with it in his jaws. And his play: in his youth he would mouth a grape, Concord or Malaga, and then lie staring at us until suddenly it would be popped over his shoulder and retrieved in a scramble. This he did untaught, and the mystery of how the grape emerged uncrushed again and again was his own invention. Now the car is his pleasure: head out the window and ears streaming, he challenges every passing dog with horrid words.

I remember other times when he spoke my language, once when in his puppyhood he was sick from the distemper injection. He began vomiting at midnight and at four I got the car and drove him to the vet's. He was so weak that he leaned limply against the corner of seat and door, but in answer to

my hand his eyes said, "I'm sorry to be such a mess. But I *am* sick." And again, years later when he had to apologize for his hunting. It was summer and our little cottage adjoined the orchard and vegetable garden of our big neighbor. At sundown rabbits would make free with the tender lettuce and carrots, and their scent — when Mickey got it — drove him wild. One evening from our screened porch I spotted a cottontail in the green. Mick was asleep, but quietly opening the door I pointed him at the quarry and he got the idea. Rabbit and spaniel disappeared over the horizon with yips marking every second bound. Two hours went by, and then in darkness there was Mick scratching at the screen. "No luck," he said, and in his mouth was the half-eaten carrot the rabbit had dropped in his haste. "No luck."

Mickey is by his nature a hunter and a retriever. But now, with his teeth gone, his retrieving is limited to fishermen's corks as they curve ahead of him on the beach, and to apples in the orchard. As a hunter he fancied himself and for years he nourished a grudge against squirrels. I used to tease him about this. Walking close to one of our oaks I would peer up into the leaves and touch the bark significantly; whereupon Mick would leave the ground jumping and scrabbling as high as my arm.

The squirrels, for their part, enjoyed the feud: they knew he could never catch them. I remember one summer day when Mickey was lying on the open porch soaking up the sun which radiated from the warm boards. Close to the house stood an old apple tree, one of whose branches reached over the porch. Along this bridge, as Mickey slept, stole one of his bushy-tailed enemies. With mathematical precision the squirrel nipped clean a hard green apple, which hit the porch with a thump an inch from Mickey's nose. It was as nice a piece of natural comedy as I have ever witnessed; and the aftermath was noisy.

That dogs remember, we know from their habits and from their twitching dreams when they are so palpably reliving some activity. But how far back does their memory reach, and do those little half-uttered cries indicate that, like man, they are long haunted by old fears? If so, then Mick may still feel the most painful terror of domesticated animals — the fear of desertion. The autumn of his second year my wife and I had to answer a sudden call to New York. We closed the cottage, packed up the daughter, and to save time left the pup with the maid. She took him to her home in Watertown, and from it he naturally escaped in search of us. That was on Friday afternoon. They saw him for

an instant at the garbage pail Saturday morning, and then he was gone for good.

By our return on Monday there wasn't a clue. We drove the unfamiliar streets and we put our appeal in the newspapers and on the air. In twenty-four hours we had heard from seventeen spaniel owners, fifteen of whom had lost their own dogs. But one of them gave us a tip. In their search they had seen a small black dog in the vast reaches of the Watertown Arsenal. So with the Governor's permission we drove through the gates — this was long before the war — to explore the cement strips which led between the huge closed buildings. A sergeant's son gave us hope. "Sure," he said, "a little black dog. He's here all right, only you can't get close to him." "Don't scare him," I said. "Find him if you can." Whistling and calling, we went to point after point, and once on the knoll above a huge oil tank I thought I heard the short familiar bark, but nothing moved. Three hours later we came back to the same spot, and there was the boy lying full-length on the cement wall aiming an imaginary gun. "The buffalo is down here," he called. Ten yards farther and I saw Mick's nest and his unmistakable head. "Mickey!" I shouted. Then up the slope he came on the dead run, his ears brown pancakes of burr.

Is it the fear of our leaving him that so troubles him when he can now no longer hear us as we move about the house? The sight of an open suitcase makes him more doleful than does a thunderstorm. When we pack for the country, there is no way to tell him that he will surely come too. In his heart of hearts Mick knows that he is dependent upon four people, and no comfort of maid or sitter can distract his vigil when we are gone for the evening. Our woods are his woods. The squirrels who used to scold him he no longer hears. But we shall hear him long after he is gone.

The eager editor

As I look back from my middle distance I can see that there were four literary editors who kept the standard of American criticism as high and as honest as it was in that decade of extraordinary production which followed the First World War. The level of American literature was higher then than it is now, and these four critics rose to sustain and appraise it: Henry L. Mencken, so impatient with the pompous, so alert for fresh vitality; Stuart Sherman, whose leading reviews in the *Sunday Tribune* were an amber blend of scholarship and enthusiasm; J. Donald Adams, who ruled the back-scratching notice and the cream-puff blurb out of the *Times* (are they out today?); and Henry Seidel Canby,

in whom the editor, teacher, and biographer are so nicely balanced.

Dr. Canby made his mark as a friendly, talkative, eager-minded young teacher at New Haven; he got his first whiff of printer's ink as the assistant in baptism of the *Yale Review*; he made the *Saturday Review of Literature* the most versatile and outspoken of the literary weeklies (I remember Leonard Bacon's devastating analysis of Alexander Woolcott entitled "The Voice of the Tenderized Prune," Dr. Canby's scoop when he reviewed *The Mint*, the unpublished novel by T. E. Lawrence, and C. K. Ogden's massacre of an interim edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*). Dr. Canby has been Chairman of the Board of Judges and explorer for the Book-of-the-Month Club since its beginning, and he has produced three thoughtful volumes of biography — his life of Thoreau, his life of Whitman, and, best of all, his own, *American Memoir*.

Dr. Canby's *Memoir* is woven together of three parts: the first, in which he recounts his half-Southern, half-Quaker boyhood in the serenity of Wilmington, Delaware; the second, in which he relives the strenuousness of the 1899 undergraduate and the pre-war vintage of the scholarship at Yale; the third, in which he projects himself into New York as editor, friend of the literary, and judge. The teacher in him is probably responsible for his occasional tendency to overelaborate (few teachers know when to stop), and as a judge of today he is guarded, for the natural reason that he is still handing down decisions. I enjoy him most as he sees himself in the sunlight of the 1910's and 1920's, in what he rightfully terms the Age of Confidence.

No editor of our times has written so acutely and so vivaciously of those who have worked with him in the literary field. His prose shots of Elinor Wylie in her anger, Vachel Lindsay in his chant, and Lord Dunsany after his lecture are memorable. He speaks of his editorial associates with fidelity informed with affection. His longer portraits of Clarence Day, Sinclair Lewis, Ellen Glasgow, and Robert Frost add insight to our understanding. His chapter on the Death of the Iron Virgin, in which he describes the breaking of the Victorian taboo on sex, and that in which he traces the March of the Ideologies are as accurate as they are vivid. The values, like the humor which glints through these pages, are those of a sane and likable American editor, still candid and unafraid.

The booze hound

The Story of Mrs. Murphy is not so Irish a novel as the title implies, chiefly, I suspect, because the author, Natalie Anderson Scott, a Russian-

born American, has not had the time or propinquity to acquire the lilt, the humor, and the expressive temperament of the Irish character. Forget the Irish, accept Mrs. Murphy as the symbol of any tender-hearted American mother who spoils her children, and then what you have is the story of Mrs. Murphy's son Rags, the booze hound and protagonist of the book, who has begun to drink before the story opens and who drinks himself to death on the last page.

Because of his physical beauty — when sober — and because he so clearly lacks the ability to save himself, Rags appeals to his family, as he appeals to the reader at the outset. Through many pages we watch what his mercurial character can do to those who love him: his sweet smile, his glad hand, his love of display, his attraction for women, his impulsive gifts, his violent temper, his foul tongue, and his fits of almost blind cruelty. The impact of Rags on his brothers and sisters and on Sue, whom he seduces but will not marry, is closely if somewhat flatly observed. The bums with whom Rags takes refuge when on his sprees, Dolores, his wealthy mistress, are people as flat and anonymous as the city in which this all takes place. The interplay, the sparks, the conflict and affection of this case history are best displayed in the relations between Rags and his Mom, but even here the feeling is dimmed by the author's flat prose and by the long tedium of Rags's deterioration. What alcoholism costs the American home is a story we should take to heart. But it must be better written than this.

Old Mandarin Morley

For years Christopher Morley has been in spiritual rapport with his alter ego, a Chinese poet, "a master of diminutive in an expansive generation," and the several volumes of verse which have resulted are a blend of Oriental detachment and Morley's puckish wit. *The Old Mandarin* runs strictly true to form, which is to say that it is delightful in a light, frothy way; that its comments on the contemporary theme range from zippers to the atomic bomb; that some of the pieces depend on a twist of meaning ("Class Dismissed"), some of them on an unexpected parallel ("Don't Fence Them In"), and some of them on the vivid statement of an idea which is so plain to behold that most of us have overlooked it ("The Very Temple"). The wit is kindly, gentle, exasperated, and pessimistic. The detachment is strictly phony, for behind it one can see that Mr. Morley is much too deeply attached to the world and to people ever to be the remote mandarin who is his front.

BOOKS THAT EDIFY

by DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

ONE of the standard American works of reference — the *World Book Encyclopedia* (The Quarrie Corporation), carefully brought up to date — is appearing this year. Let me tell you something about it, and then perhaps I may have space at the end to set down some of my reasons for thinking its publication with 1947 revisions an event of considerable significance. Although it is planned as a source of information for youngsters in school, it can be, and often is, consulted by grown-up citizens, among whom I range myself.

Don't forget that all of us, in many facets and aspects of our personalities, are "young" in the sense of being uninformed and inexperienced. For instance, I am quite my own age (close to seventy) as to French literature, because that has been a special interest of mine nearly all my life. But in the matter of information about, say, ocean currents, or the ethnology of the people of Nicaragua, I cannot claim a mental age of more than twelve. That is the age for which these cheerful, colorful volumes of bright red and blue were produced. For me too, this outward aspect is encouraging. It suggests to me (as to the eighth-grader) that what I find inside will not, by its cold scholarly rigidity, swamp and drown my not very deep or keen (but all the same living) interest in a subject, aroused perhaps by a casual reference in something I have been reading.

Open any volume and you will find another device, tried and ancient and familiar, but only recently accepted by the inner circle of educational scholars — visual presentation of facts formerly treated only in words. Pictures, diagrams, maps. How well I remember the thrill such diagrams brought me as a young girl. There was an article about how to tie knots, written for the then equivalent of Girl and Boy Scouts. Neither I nor my friends had any particular interest in ropes, but we used to hang over those diagrams, fascinated by the light they shed. As our young eyes followed the ins and outs of the ropes there on the page, we had the enchanted, astonished sensation familiar to us when in winter we rubbed a place clear on a frosted window and suddenly saw, alive and vivid, the world outside which had been shadowy dimness.

The pages of the new edition of this encyclopedia are full of such diagrams, making clear, as no words could, the relation of air pockets to flying airplanes, the way a bird's gizzard works compared to a regular stomach, the effect a glacier has on the earth beneath it, the physics of the struggle between the

speed of the moon and the earth's gravity. And what illustrations! Color flashes its "stop and look" signal on so many pages that, like a true Vermonter, I ask myself wildly wherever did the money come from.

All kinds of other pictures, too. Reproductions, not of first-rate quality but respectable, of old prints and engravings, as in the article on Lady Jane Grey, and on the Confederate cruiser *Alabama*. Reproductions of especially good book illustrations. Lots of pictographs, and these are very costly. Hardly a page without its appeal to the eye as well as to the reading mind. As I look at them, it occurs to me that the book would be fascinating to the younger brother or sister of the twelve-year-old; that it would be a pleasure to one of my younger grandchildren as well as to me.

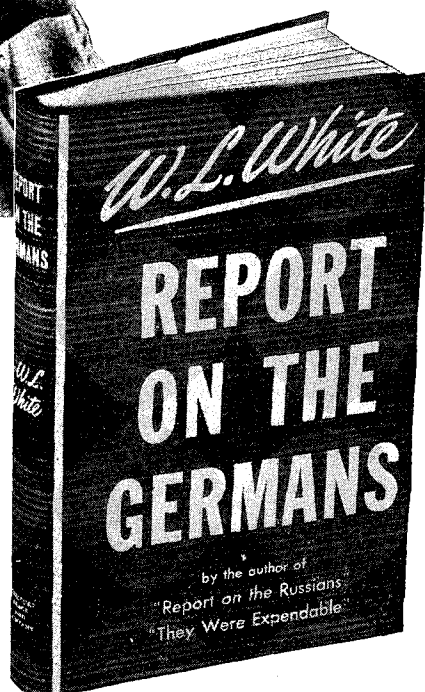
But it would be light-minded and intellectually irresponsible to lay too much stress on pictures. The text of a book of this kind is the real test of its quality. It is when I turn my attention to that core of the effort that I most appreciate the slogging hard work which must have gone into this manual for all of us. I have had no connection with this undertaking, know about it nothing more than can be seen in the finished volumes. But I have had a good deal of experience with other publications which require the united — well, anyhow, the combined — efforts of many writers and editors. And whether you have had such experience or not, you don't need to be told that human nature must be very much in evidence at every phase of the long-drawn-out undertaking.

I note, for instance, with warm approval that practically all these articles are signed by the initials of those who wrote them, following the intellectually respectable method of encyclopedias for adults. If you look back at the first volume, you will find a very long list of specialists who have written these articles. Look up one, say the article on Gandhi. You will find that it is by the Professor of Eastern History and Oriental Institutions at the University of Chicago. The piece on the Grimm fairy tales (an especially intelligent article) was written by the Professor of Literature in a highly respected urban university.

The sheer endurance required to get together such a list of contributors, the mountains of letters which must have been written to and by them, the amount of tact, flexibility, firmness, required to "handle" scholars with good reasons to demand respectful treatment, the infinite number of work-hours expended to verify and check their work, to induce them to accept editorial changes, and to



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make sure the editorial changes are good ones — I am fairly awed by the thought of it.

There is one question which comes naturally into the minds of experienced Americans, in regard to such a reference work, intended to be read by all kinds of youngsters in all kinds of schools, as well as by their parents; by the filling-station man and his wife; by the Maine farmer whose son has just gone to live in Michigan, and who wants to know something (not too much) about that state; by the refrigerator salesman who sees a mention of iron pyrites in his newspaper and wants to know more about that mineral; by the man who reads the gas meter; by the learned professor of Middle High German who knows no more than I do, or the twelve-year-old, about the role played in modern industry by “grinding tools”; by the railroad ticket-seller whose high school daughter needs for her next day’s recitation to know something about the Edict of Nantes. Every one of those readers is embedded in a matrix of fixed ideas and prejudices. How, in a vast heterogeneous federation of states like ours, can any reference book be put together which, in many items, will not clash loudly with convictions held by many of its readers? Is the only solution so to dilute the controversial subjects that they have no taste of reality left in them?

I turned to the article in the *World Book* on the Edict of Nantes and its revocation, feeling that subject to be a live wire of controversy if there ever was one. I found a brief, plain, factual, accurate (as far as it went, and it went far enough for all ordinary purposes), simplified statement of what happened in France at that time. No color of condemnation, no color of condoning, no implied or open accusation, no self-defensive counteraccusation. Anyone who read that article would know enough about the Edict of Nantes to understand references to it in his reading — in his ordinary reading, that is, such as we do in matters for which we have not a specialist’s concern.

Then I looked up the treatment of this subject in my beloved *Britannica*, daily counselor and teacher. The article was twice as long as in the book for the twelve-year-old (and don’t forget that this is my mental age and that of the Professor of German and of the railroad ticket-seller when it comes to information about whales and grinding tools). And in the first line of the *Britannica* statement was the word “promulgated.” Now I have no personal acquaintance with these learned specialists, but my observation of human nature makes me pretty sure that if the word “promulgated” did not come readily to the pen of the distinguished professor who

wrote the article in the book for the young, I miss my guess. But it was not in the article as printed in the *World Book*. There was not a dictionary word in that statement. It was plain, readable, if undistinguished English. Who took out “promulgated”? The author himself, after suggestions from the editorial board? Or an editor at headquarters? If, as seems likely, some sparks flew over it, there is no trace of them in the finished work.

Later on in the *Britannica*, I found the statement that by the terms of the Edict of Nantes, “Protestants could also worship in two towns in each *bailliage* and *sénéchaussée*.” I have long studied French history, off and on, but I wouldn’t know, without looking them up, what kinds of governmental units are represented by those words. The reference book for the twelve-year-old tells us that “Protestants were allowed freedom of worship in about seventy-five towns.”

Now the *Britannica* article with those long French words looks on the page more like “scholarly accuracy,” doesn’t it? It *is* more accurate — for a specialist in French history. For the twelve-year-old, for the filling-station man, and for me, it makes no sense at all. We not only do not know what *sénéchaussées* are, but we haven’t the slightest idea how many of them there were in France in 1598. And I make bold to claim that our ignorance is not due to the mediocrity inevitably caused (we sometimes hear) by democracy, but to the fact that there is no earthly reason why we should know that fact.

The troubling question about the possibility of presenting, for general reading, subjects about which people have strongly conflicting convictions was answered by an item in the explanation about how this book was put together. Every article was submitted to some expert reader other than the author. Articles touching on the Roman Catholic Church, I learned, were all read and passed on by Monsignor Sheen. I looked up to see who wrote the article in question. It was Professor Shapiro of the City College of New York. I maintain that any citizen of our democracy can, with full confidence in the mighty American principle of checks and balances, lean his whole weight on an article about the Edict of Nantes written by a man called Shapiro, passed on by a man called Sheen, and edited to clarity by responsible experts in the art of making information readable.

I also maintain that the existence of such works of reference (for this is not the only one — I know and admire another standard work of this kind, Compton’s) has something to say to people scru-

tinizing democracy, anxious (or hopeful) about its ability to invent institutions to meet its changing needs.

One of the obvious needs of democracy is for a wider and wider distribution, among its ordinary citizens, of the raw materials of understanding. Understanding is made up of two elements: one, an exact, detailed, accurate knowledge of, and skill in, some one among the activities of mankind, such knowledge as the scientist gets by looking patiently through a microscope. But unless the practitioner of this skill acquires the second of the elements of understanding — that is, some idea of its relation to the whole of which it is a part — his precisely accurate knowledge will be but a snare and a stumbling block.

The scientist gets his precise vision of one corner of his subject by the great, the enormous, the prime intellectual virtue of true scholarly accuracy, the standard for which can never be too high. But if he does not get a more general acquaintance with the whole human landscape, he is correctly estimated as a useless high-brow, and deservedly ignored by those who attempt to manage human life with intelligence.

The ordinary man gets this exact, precise mastery of one part of the whole in his work. The trouble shooter in a repair garage acquires the intellectual arts of how to weigh evidence and to prove by elimination, although he may never have heard the names of these mental processes. He greatly needs some mental tools to widen his general information about things which have no connection with ailing automobiles. If he doesn't so widen his general grasp on the nature of things, Hitler gets him. The citizen of a democracy needs a whole mind in a whole body as the citizen of a totalitarian state does not.

One of the devices to meet this need is book education. Our American democracy has been clawing its way as fast as it could towards success in giving book education to those of our people younger than the earning-a-living age. It is now going forward in the attempt to do more of this for the older folks.

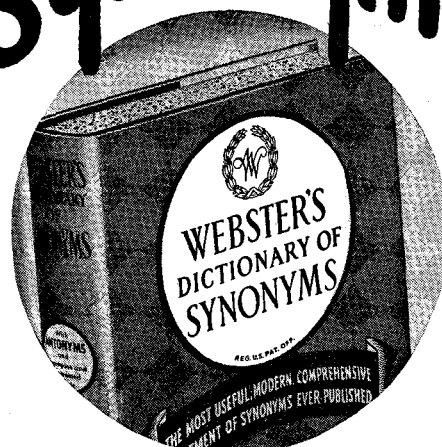
Our country is rich, materially. Some of that wealth is being used to finance (not by the state but by ordinary business processes) educational undertakings like these sound people's encyclopedias. They cost fabulous sums to prepare, obviously. But because we are an immense and, relatively speaking, well-to-do country, enormous sales can be counted on to offset the cost. Here is democracy using its own home-grown tools to take care of its own needs.

It looks to me like a perfectly functional expression of our American way of doing things, depending solely on the resources and skills — intellectual, financial, administrative, educational — of our big democracy, lumbering forward to meet the future, not with elegance and distinction, perhaps, but with honesty and power.

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Elliot Paul RANDOM HOUSE

In *Linden on the Saugus Branch* the cosmopolitan Elliot Paul offers, in the form of a boyhood memoir, an elegant blend of fact and fiction. It is very like his *The Last Time I Saw Paris* in mood, but at the same time very different in content, as different as Paris is from the outskirts of Malden, Massachusetts. It is a fact, I presume, that Mr. Paul was born and raised in that desolate region; but beyond that, the mixture of probable, possible, and highly improbable is so smooth that the taste of the original ingredients disappears.

A small town in Massachusetts at the turn of the century is Mr. Paul's scene, and his stage properties are the usual ones — horsecars, the village drugstore, the little branch railroad that connected Linden to the big city, the local drinking place, and the church. There is the feeling of the near-by sea, and a smattering of local legend; and through the book are sprinkled magic names that will douse the exiled Bostonian in ninety-proof nostalgia — Cobb, Bates & Yerxa; Houghton and Dutton; Raymond's (where, although Mr. Paul does not say so, U bot the hat); the Castle Square Hotel; the North Station.

The book jacket refers to the anecdotes in *Linden on the Saugus Branch* as fortified memories. Well, that's the way anecdotes should be treated — liberally fortified with invention. Mr. Paul starts, for instance, with a neurotic young schoolma'am. There is one in every town, and I assume Linden was no exception. He provides a Rabelaisian explanation for her condition, a melodramatic denouement to her story, and a sentimental happy ending. If it is not the real story of the schoolma'am, it is what it ought to have been. Oscar Wilde told us, after all, that the function of art is to inform life.

The reader must accept Mr. Paul's memories on their face value; or else he will occasionally find himself in a mildly argumentative state, and inclined to quarrel with the author's blithe intimations that this particular spot in the coastal swamps of New England was populated with gourmets, philosophers, liberal thinkers, lovable spinsters, open-handed uncles, priapic males, and indulgent females. Fortification or no fortification, one must register a formal protest at the idea that the collective love-life of any New England village in the early nineteen-hundreds could have been as feverish as in Mr. Paul's Linden.

In these days of universal insecurity, the sense of the past grows stronger, and with it the irrational urge to step back across the years and make life what it should have been instead of what it was. Mr. Paul demonstrates that this can be done, at least in a book.

RUSSELL MALONEY

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HERE is a book by a well-known American trial lawyer about one of the greatest advocates in the history of the

English bar. This account of Lord Erskine's career, says John W. Davis on the book's jacket, "is *must* reading for every American lawyer." It is also pleasant and occasionally dramatic and exciting reading for any layman. Mr. Stryker's presentations of some of Erskine's more important cases, such as the defense of James Hadfield in 1800, of Thomas Hardy in 1794, or his earlier and astonishing successes in defending the rights of common men against prejudice and precedent, are written with the greatest vigor and feeling. The author appreciates fully the actor, the dramatic quality in Erskine, as well as his careful study of a juror's psychology, the charm and manliness of his bearing, and his apparently whole-souled conviction in the general principles calculated to sustain his clients' innocence. These qualities, combined with a genuine eloquence, a superb voice and delivery, the manners of a gentleman, plus that indefinable something which distinguishes the great advocate from the merely competent, made Erskine one of the most successful trial lawyers of all time.

As member of Parliament, as a close friend of Fox and Sheridan and — for long — of Burke, and as Lord Chancellor, Erskine was a singularly attractive and winning personality, as delightful in private company as he was formidable in his profession. Moreover, the greatest part of his thinking and effort was on the side of the underdog. He was a friend of the rebellious American Colonies, a consistent believer in Parliamentary and administrative reform, and a constant fighter against privilege.

In fact Mr. Stryker finds his hero so admirable throughout that he can hardly endure the slightest contemporary or later criticism of him. If Byron noted that Erskine talked too much and repeated himself at dinner, Mr. Stryker puts it down to spleen on Byron's part that the opportunity to shine was denied him. If Samuel Romilly, the leader of the Chancery bar, wrote in his journal his doubts as to Erskine's knowledge of equity or fitness for the Chancellorship, Mr. Stryker says that he was envious and malicious. Nor can he quite bring himself to admit that the younger Pitt, in his icy, disdainful aloofness, found a method of opposing Erskine which disconcerted and disarmed him.

If one must, therefore, make some qualifications as to the perfect accuracy of Mr. Stryker's portrait of Erskine, his exaggerations are attributable to a generous devotion to and admiration of his subject. A more serious criticism may be made against Mr. Stryker's condensations of history, of the background against which Erskine and his great contemporaries played their parts. Here we find a consistent Macaulayish Whiggism which is certainly an oversimplification of history as it is now understood and written. The modern reader will take such forensic treatment of eighteenth-century events and personalities with a grain of salt, realizing that the author is himself a distinguished advocate and that he is pleading his client's cause.

One can, however, heartily recommend the high lights of the book — the stories of individual trials and cases. Here the author is fully qualified to understand and present the drama of his scenes, and he does so most admi-

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1 1 1

PRINCE OF FOXES

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Samuel Shellabarger

LITTLE, BROWN

SINCE the time of Walter Scott, the historical novel has been advanced by two great discoveries: first, that events can be more various if the hero (or heroine) is a bit of a scoundrel; and second, that an attempted assassination on every fifth page is twice as exciting as one on every tenth page. Mr. Shellabarger has taken both these discoveries to heart. The background of his new novel, *Italy in the year 1500*, gives him plenty of scope to exercise these principles.

The prince of Mr. Shellabarger's title is one Andrea Zoppo, a multitudinously talented young man who sees in the confusion of the times the chance to become a nobleman instead of remaining a mere painter. He becomes an Orsini, of the supposedly defunct Neapolitan branch of that house. Exactly how Andrea establishes himself as an aristocrat, Mr. Shellabarger never troubles to explain. When the reader meets him, Orsini is a trusted agent of Cesare Borgia, stopping in Venice on his way to Ferrara, where he is to serve the old Duke D'Este as captain of crossbowmen and promote a marriage between young D'Este and Borgia's much-maligned sister Lucrezia. In return, he is to receive the small state of Città del Monte and the young widow of its lord, as soon as that gentleman shall have been liquidated. There is even hope that old Varano may die a natural death. Orsini, in short, is well on the road to that fortune to which his wits, his guile, his courage, and his lack of scruple entitle him.

In addition to spinning a lively tale of love and intrigue, Mr. Shellabarger has a fine touch with historical background. It is there, it is vivid, it is accurate, but it is never permitted to interfere with the story. The author displays a blessed willingness to leave unnecessary information in his files.

It must be admitted that the people are never quite so entertaining as the story. Andrea outwits so many adversaries, and with such ease, that one cannot seriously worry about him even when the future looks coal-black. Too many of these same adversaries are straw men. Camilla, the lady so airily promised Orsini by Cesare Borgia, is too consistently virtuous, high-spirited, and reasonable in the face of difficulties calculated to sour any lady's disposition.

The minor people, however, are often very good. Camilla's husband, the old lord Varano, is a delightful survivor from a simpler age. The Frenchman, Bayard, honest, intelligent, faintly comical in his earnest pursuit of honor, is a pleasure whenever he turns up. And Mario Belli, Andrea's inevitable henchman, is an interesting sketch of villainy through exasperation.

The great disappointment in this otherwise entertaining novel is Cesare Borgia. Mr. Shellabarger has probably

done him strict historical justice, but it is disillusioning. I had thought worse of Borgia than this.

PHOEBE LOU ADAMS

1 1 1

THE STORY OF ARCHITECTURE IN MEXICO

Trent E. Sanford

NORTON, \$6.00

VISITORS to Mexico often ask why it was possible for the Spaniards to build more grandly in sixteenth-century Mexico than in our Southwest two centuries later. Part I of Sanford's welcome one-volume history of Mexican architecture answers that question with an extraordinary amount of well-observed detail: the monks who followed the conquerors found hundreds of thousands of artisans already trained in a great tradition of building.

Concentrating on the more accessible ruins of the ancient races, the author — himself a practicing architect with a camera eye — describes the development of the indigenous architecture from the building of the oldest monument in our hemisphere, the archaic Pyramid of Cuicuilco, near Mexico City, to the Aztec decadence. All the great builders are there: the Maya, the so-called Olmecs, the Mixtecs and Zapotecs, the "mysterious" Toltecs, and the newly discovered Toltec kinsmen, the Matlatzincas of the Toluca basin.

After a brief account of the architectural styles of Catholic Spain — Gothic, Mudéjar, Renaissance, Plateresque, baroque, Churrigueresque — Sanford describes their reappearance in colonial Mexico. Of some four hundred monastic houses founded by the Franciscan, Dominican, Carmelite, and Augustinian Fathers in the sixteenth century, he takes the reader on vivid and leisurely visits to such delightful examples as the quasi-Gothic and Plateresque convents of Actopan, on the highway into Mexico City, and Acolman, near the Toltec pyramids of the Sun and the Moon; the Plateresque convent of Tepoztlán, with its droll native ornaments; the stunning Gothic and Romanesque and Moorish convent at Huejotzingo, on the highway to Puebla. (New roads have lately made a number of unmentioned *conventos* easy to see: Atlatlahuacan, decorated in pink and magenta, and Oaxtepec, frescoed with the black and white figures of Dominican saints, and Santo Domingo, in Yanhuitlán, on the new road to Oaxaca.)

The baroque, ultra-baroque, and neoclassical churches and palaces out in the provinces are explored with great taste and scholarship and against a lively historical background. The book will explain why so many baroque churches in the Tresguerras country have quasi-Doric interiors: just as elsewhere, Spanish baroque was inventively finished off in the natively florid elaboration of the Churrigueresque style — the style which Sacheverell Sitwell characterizes as having "fluttering edges."

The work is usefully and excitingly illustrated by 106 photographs and 12 maps and drawings.

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